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THE

TWELVE MINOR PROPHETS.

EXPOUNDED BY

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EDINBURGH:
T. & T. CLARK, 38 GEORGE STREET.
1893.

973

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION,	1

HOSEA.

Introduction,	5
Opening: Yahveh's Marriage Covenant with His people, chs. i.–iii.,	9
Hosea's Discourses—	
Israel Accused and Threatened, ch. iv.,	27
Reckoning with Princes and People, chs. v.–vii.,	33
Second Alarm! ch. viii.,	45
State of Punishment, ix. 1–9,	49
First Series of Angry Retrospects, ix. 10–xi. 11,	51
Further Retrospects and Prospect of a Gracious Change, chs. xii.–xiv.,	61

JOEL.

Introduction,	73
Exposition,	78

AMOS.

Introduction,	103
Exordium: Announcement of Judgment, chs. i., ii.,	108
First Menacing Discourse: The Approaching Judgment, ch. iii.,	118
Second Menacing Discourse: Climax of Accusation, ch. iv.,	122
Third Menacing Discourse: Lament over Israel, chs. v., vi.,	127
Two Warning Visions and One Threatening Vision, ch. vii.,	139
Fourth Vision, ch. viii.,	145
Fifth Vision and Closing Discourse, ch. ix.,	149

OBADIAH.

Introduction,	156
Exposition,	158

JONAH.

PAGE
Introduction, ... 167
Exposition, ... 173

MICAH.

Introduction, ... 185
Judgment on Samaria and Judah, ch. i., ... 190
Against the False Comfort of uncalled Prophets, chs. ii., iii., . . 196
Divine Judgment turning to Salvation, chs. iv., v., . . . 204
Change from State of Ruin to State of Grace, chs. vi., vii., . . 213

NAHUM.

Introduction, ... 223
1. The True God and His Enemy, ch. i., ... 225
2. Nineveh's Fall, ch. ii., ... 228
3. The Abomination of the Imperial City and the Judgment, ch. iii., . 233

HABAKKUK.

Introduction, ... 240
Exposition, ... 243

ZEPHANIAH.

Introduction, ... 260
The General Judgment falls on Jerusalem, ch. i., . . . 263
Humble yourselves before the Judgment, ch. ii., ... 268
Jerusalem Purified and made God's City: the World God's Kingdom, ch. iii., ... 274

HAGGAI.

Introduction, ... 281
First Discourse: Set to Work, Indolent ones! ch. i., . . . 283
Second Discourse: Be of Good Cheer! ch. ii. 1–9, . . . 290
Third Discourse: Comforting Information about the Consequences of the Building of the Temple, ch. ii. 10–19, ... 294
Fourth Oracle: Divine Distinction of the Prince of David's House, ch. ii. 20–23, ... 298

ZECHARIAH.

Introduction, ... 301
First Discourse of Zechariah: Repent! ch. i. 1–6, . . . 311

PAGE

Zechariah's Night Visions—
1. The Divine Band of Horsemen, ch. i. 7–17, . . . 313
2. Four Horns and Four Smiths, ch. ii. 1–4, . . . 318
3. The Glorious Building of Jerusalem, ch. ii. 5–17, . . 319
4. The Auspicious Priesthood, ch. iii., ... 323
5. The Golden Candlestick, ch. iv., ... 328
6. The Curse-Roll and Sin-Bushel, ch. v., ... 332
7. The Four Chariots, ch. vi. 1–8, ... 335
Conclusion: Crowning of the High Priest, ch. vi. 9–15, . . 338
The Question of Fasting, chs. vii., viii., ... 342
The Divine Messianic Kingdom after the Judgment on God's People, chs. ix.–xi., ... 350
The Future Judah and Jerusalem, chs. xii.–xiv., . . . 364

MALACHI.

Introduction, ... 382
First Discourse: Complaint of neglecting the Lord, ch. i., . . 385
Second Discourse: Treachery of Priests and People, ch. ii. 1–6, . . 392
Third Discourse: The Day of the Lord, ... 398

THE TWELVE MINOR PROPHETS.

—o—

INTRODUCTION.

From very early days twelve smaller writings are found united, just because of their smallness (*Baba Bathra*, 14*b*), in one collection under the name of "The Twelve," שְׁנֵים עָשָׂר (Massoret. תְּרֵיסַר from תְּרֵי עֲסַר); Greek *οἱ δώδεκα προφῆται* (so already in Ecclus. xlix. 10), or *τὸ δωδεκαπρόφητον*. But in the Latin Church the title "The Minor Prophets" (*Prophetæ Minores*) arose, which predicate, as Jerome (*Prœm. in Esaiam*) and Augustine (*De Civit. Dei*, xviii. 29) point out, only refers to the outward extent of these writings, their contents being scarcely second in importance to those of the great prophetical books; cf. *e.g.* the Advent-tidings of Zechariah, the Christmas-gospel of Micah, the Easter-sign of Jonah, the Pentecost-promise of Joel! Judged from this outward point of view, then, writings, lying far apart in time, were brought together in this group, which embraces some, both of the oldest and the latest, of the prophetic writings that have come down to us. How old this combination is, is shown by Ecclus. xlix. 10 (cf. Fritzsche there), where the "twelve prophets" appear, after Jeremiah and Ezekiel out of regard to their position in the canon, as a completed whole. They were therefore collected soon after Malachi's days; nay, it is probable that the majority of them were found together in a special collection even before the Exile. In the following times, also, the twelve were

always regarded as *one* canonical book, whether the number of the canonical books be put at twenty-two, after the Hellenistic custom (so Joseph. *contra Apion*, i. 8; Origen, *et al.*), or twenty-four, after the Talmudic.

The order of the writings in LXX is not the same as in the Hebrew canon.

Hebrew: 1. Hosea; 2. Joel; 3. Amos; 4. Obadiah; 5. Jonah; 6. Micah.

LXX: 1. Hosea; 2. Amos; 3. Micah; 4. Joel; 5. Obadiah; 6. Jonah.

Both: 7. Nahum; 8. Habakkuk; 9. Zephaniah; 10. Haggai; 11. Zechariah; 12. Malachi.

The first arrangement seems more original; yet neither the one nor the other is of importance for determining the date of these writings, as in both, while the chronological element plainly appears towards the end (Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi), the question of time in the other books does not seem to have been so present to the mind of the collectors, so that here other considerations had influence; thus Hosea stands first, as the largest of the pre-exilic minor prophets (cf. the Epistle to the Romans at the head of the Pauline Epistles). Cf. an attempt to exhibit the genesis of the whole book in detail in H. Ewald, *Proph. of Old Test.* vol. i. 91, 98 f. Delitzsch (*Rudelb. and Guericke's Zeitschr.* 1851, p. 92 f.) tries to construct an arrangement by mottoes and association of ideas; he is followed by Keil, *Introd. to O. T.* i. 365. With chronology as our rule, we should get (in our opinion) the following order, in which we recommend the books to be read: 1. Obadiah; 2. Joel; [3. Jonah;] 4. Amos; 5. Hosea, (Zech. ix.–xi.); 6. Micah; 7. Nahum; 8. Zephaniah; 9. Habakkuk, (Zech. xii.–xiv.); 10. Haggai; 11. Zechariah (i.–viii.); 12. Malachi.

The text of the whole book is generally in a good state of preservation, as is seen by comparison with the LXX, who present substantially the same material, although showing

little insight into Hebrew syntax and the force of words, and often reading the text wrongly. Cases in which the Hebrew wording should be corrected after the LXX are therefore rare, although not altogether wanting.

Literature.—Expositions of the entire book of the Minor Prophets: Patristic commentaries by Jerome, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Cyril of Alex., Theodoret; Rabbinical, by Rashi (Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac, †1105), Ibn Ezra (†1167). D. Kimchi (†1230); in the Reformation period; Oecolampadius (1555), Calvin (1559). See post-Reformation exposition in Kleinert on Obad. to Zephaniah. Of modern expositors may be mentioned: F. Hitzig (1838, 4 Aufl., setting aside untenable positions; revised by H. Steiner, 1881); H. Ewald, *Prophets of O. T.* (5 vols., Williams & Norgate); P. Schegg (Catholic); E. B. Pusey, *The Minor Prophets;* Keil, ditto, 2 vols. (Clark); *Speaker's Comm.* vol. vi.; Farrar, *The Minor Prophets* (Nisbet); Lange's *Commentary*, by Schmoller, Kleinert, and J. P. Lange; J. Wolfendale, *Homilet. Comm. on Minor Prophets*, 1880. I have a college course on Hosea to Jonah by Fr. Delitzsch, which I took down in the winter of 1868–69, which has constantly been of special value to me in the exposition of these prophets. The influence of this exposition on my own reaches, however, beyond the citations, extending often to the translation. The best edition of the text is by S. Baer, *Liber XII. Proph.* 1878. Comparison of the Massoret. text with LXX in K. A. Vollers, *Das Dodekapropheton der Alexandriner*, i. (Nahum to Malachi), Berlin 1880; see the continuation in *Zeitschr. für altt. Wissensch.* 1883, p. 219 ff.; 1884, p. 1 ff. Comparison of the Massoret. text with the Syrian version in M. Sebök (Schönberger), *Die syrische Uebersetzung der zwölf kleinen Propheten*, Breslau 1887. For expositions of the several writings, see *in loc.*

An asterisk (*) signifies that the text is uncertain.

HOSEA.

Introduction.

The name Hosea (הוֹשֵׁעַ, inf. not imperat.), meaning "help, deliverance," belongs to this prophet in common with the son of Nun, who, however, received the fuller name, Joshua, from Moses (Num. xiii. 26). The heading, i. 1, calls his father Beeri, which name occurs again in Gen. xxvi. 34. Respecting Hosea's personal relations and course of life, if we set aside worthless traditions (see such in Knobel, *Prophetismus der Hebräer*, ii. 154, and Nowack, *Der Prophet Hosea*, p. ix. f.), nothing further is known than what his own book tells us. Respecting the time of his appearance first of all, the same heading says, The word of Yahveh came to him "in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel." This indication of date, however, which as to its first part agrees verbatim with Isa. i. 1 (cf. also Micah i. 1), is not to be regarded as originating in this form with Hosea himself. Although the naming of the Judæan kings may perhaps be explained by the circumstance that the prophet regarded them as the heirs of the legitimate government and of the promises made to David's house (cf. Amos i. 1, where, however, it should be noted that Amos was a Judæan), it is strange that only Jeroboam II. is mentioned of the Israelitish kings, whilst the list of Judæan rulers descends much lower. Moreover, the dating by the latter list is not confirmed by the contents of the book. Indeed, the first appearance of Hosea

is to be placed in the last years of Jeroboam II., and his work continued a number of years later beyond the disorderly times of Zechariah, the son of Jeroboam, and his murderer, Shallum, on towards the end of the ten years' reign of Menahem (2 Kings xv. 8–22). Cf. on the whole question of chronology, Klostermann, *Comm. on Book of Kings*, p. 493 ff. On the other hand, Hosea scarcely continued to prophesy under the Judæan kings Ahaz and Hezekiah, as no notice is taken of the eventful war of Pekah against Ahaz of Judah. As, on the other hand, the omission of a heading with indication of date would look strange, the most likely supposition is that of Hitzig, Delitzsch, Nowack, to the effect that the heading originally ran: The word of Yahveh, which came to H., the son of B., in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel. It would then, in the first instance, take only the beginning of Hosea's prophetic work into view (as in Amos i. 1).

Thus Hosea follows closely on Amos. He took up the latter's work in the northern kingdom, of which he was perhaps a native (in distinction from Amos); he speaks of its king as "our king" (ch. vii. 5), shows himself well acquainted with its circumstances, and addresses his discourses in the first instance to its inhabitants, whereas he refers in a more cursory way to Judah, for which certainly he has a deeper-rooted affection. That he afterwards migrated to Judah, when all was lost in the Ephraimite kingdom, and gathered his prophecies together there (so Ewald), is mere conjecture. The picture which he sketches of the state of Israel is, from beginning to end, a very gloomy one. Princes and people have not been reformed by the powerful appeals of an Amos. On the contrary, whilst offensive image-worship and wanton hill-worship continue, the nation thus persisting in its ingratitude and infidelity to Yahveh, gross violence and cunning have gained the upper hand; one rebellion follows on another, and the entire kingdom marches with rapid

strides towards the ruin long since threatened by the prophetic message. No alliance with Assyria or Egypt can avail; foolish dalliance with foreign powers will only hasten the catastrophe. The very lands, whose friendship the nation courts, will be its prison, where it will spend the long period of its banishment. Of Judah, Hosea still hopes better things (ch. i. 7, iv. 15), and yet will soon have to foretell its exile also, though not without hope of return (ch. v. 6, vi. 11); for in Hosea promise always has the last word.

Chs. i.–iii. are plainly distinct from the rest of the book, narrating the prophet's domestic experiences, in which the real gist of his message finds symbolic expression. We here get a glimpse of his married life, which was an unhappy one, because in his personal life the divine life was to be reflected, and in the unfaithfulness of his wife that of the community of Yahveh. See on this point p. 21. In chs. iv.–xiv. the discourses proper follow. They are certainly neither revised and dated, nor written out with detailed fulness and finish, on which account it is not always possible to divide them with certainty. They are oracles belonging to different dates, written down in the freshness of inspiration, and afterwards collected by the prophet himself, and in all probability arranged chronologically; in matter, the individual discourses, as well as their aggregate, show no strictly logical progress; the same fundamental thoughts recur again and again with inexhaustible freshness of form; sharp antitheses follow each other abruptly. Nevertheless, the whole exhibits a growing tension and depth of feeling in harmony with the course of events, and, where outward forms of conjunction are wanting in the several discourses, the inner connection is discernible from the fundamental ideas inspiring the prophet.

The moral individuality of Hosea is everywhere conspicuous in his book. The more he was absorbed in his calling, the more his life and teachings, his person and activity, were penetrated with the prophetic spirit, so much

the more plainly his personality stamped itself on his written communications. Although a witness of the same God as Amos, whose sayings he not seldom recalls (cf. especially ch. viii. 14), he still has another way of making known the divine message. Whereas Amos, as a fearless, inflexible preacher of repentance, makes men hear the majestic thunder of God's word to terrify sinners, Hosea employs all the eloquence of love to lead his people to repentance. It is true he also rebukes without mercy; but even his passages of rebuke tremble with the tenderest sympathy, with the keenest pain, with ineffable sorrow for his nation. Hosea has the same mournful mission as Jeremiah had afterwards in the southern kingdom, to pronounce sentence of death on his nation, and sing its elegy; he shows also the same gentleness and sensitive, affectionate heart as that prophet. The form of address, on the other hand, is essentially different. Whereas in Jeremiah, when he writes, high excitement has already given way to calm resignation, Hosea's book places us amid the inner excitement, in which, seized by the *furor divinus*, he fought a hopeless fight for his people's salvation. The deep emotion of his heart expresses itself in the fervour and rush of his language; it leaps from one thought to another, from figure to figure, from antithesis to antithesis; and when passion has become so strong that he can no longer find words, he hints in broken sentences the ideas rending his breast. To this overpowering enthusiasm, which breathes in his discourses, and which gained for him—the sorely beset one (ch. ix. 8)—the derisive name of a מְשֻׁגָּע (ch. ix. 7), is due the obscurity of his discourses, often making explanation very difficult; cf. Ewald's delineation, *Prophets*, vol. i. p. 218. The prophet's conflict of feeling has a deeper ground in the glaring contradictions in which he found himself placed. Profound revelations of the divine nature have been given to him more than to any of his contemporaries. Whilst Amos proclaims the greatness and incorruptible righteousness of God

with irresistible power, Hosea is the herald of the divine love. This is the fundamental relation which God assumed to His people when He led it out of Egypt; by His decree of wondrous grace it was to be His elect possession, in which He would take delight, as a husband in his wife. The more delicate and intimate this relation of mutual love ought to be by its very nature, the more revolting its rude violation by the highly-favoured people. This it is which drives the prophet beside himself, that the God of grace, instead of grateful love, meets only with obstinacy; instead of reverential constancy, only wantonness and adultery. Therefore His wrath, perforce, pours itself out on the unworthy object of His love; the nation is doomed. Yet, strange to say, out of cheerless condemnation shines again at last the light of grace. God's compassion cannot finally leave His people to misery. He will at last, of free mercy, restore the gracious state which He had in mind from the first, and will bring back the repentant nation as His bride to its own land, to enjoy the closest and most blessed fellowship with Himself.

Even apart from the irregular construction of sentences already touched on, Hosea's style shows certain peculiarities; in part, novel forms of syntax and favourite terms of expression, to which Delitzsch has called attention (see on ch. v. 6, x. 9, ii. 12, viii. 9); in part, peculiar formations of words and phrases, which may have belonged to the vernacular of north Palestine, or may certainly, in isolated cases (like ch. iv. 18), rest on corrupt readings. The text is otherwise in a good state of preservation, and appears far superior to the LXX, whose readings deserve the preference, if at all, only in exceptional instances (as in ch. vi. 5, xiv. 9). Cf. on the Massoretic text, H. L. Strack, *Hosea et Joel Proph. ad fidem Codicis Babylonici Petropolitani*, 1875. The genuineness of the book, as a whole and in detail, is not seriously contested.

Of the special literature on Hosea still to be mentioned, there are commentaries by Aug. Simson (1851), still worthy

of notice; Aug. Wünsche (1868), rich in material from Targum and rabbinical exegesis; Tötterman (1879), W. Nowack (1880), written with research and care, useful in guiding inquiry; Ant. Scholz (Cath. 1882). Cf. also the article (by Fr. Delitzsch), "Hosea und sein Weissagungsbuch," in the *Zeitschr. für Protest. u. Kirche*, 1854, p. 98 ff. Also Cheyne, *Hosea* (Cambridge Bible for Schools); Davidson, *Expositor*, 1879, p. 241 ff.

I. 1. The word of Yahveh which came to Hosea the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.

OPENING: THE MARRIAGE-COVENANT OF YAHVEH WITH HIS PEOPLE, CHS. I.–III.

2. At first when Yahveh spoke with Hosea, Yahveh said to Hosea, Go, take to thee a wife of whoredom, and children of whoredom: for truly the land plays the harlot instead of

CHAPTER I.

Ver. 1. On the heading, see Introd. p. 4. Ver. 2. To the stat. constr. תחלת (accus. defining time) a verbum fin. is added in the genitive.—בְּ in בהושע is neither to be explained instrumentally, nor of speaking into the prophet, but introduces the remoter object, or the person addressed: to speak with or to one, as in Zech. i. 13, etc. Num. xii. 8 is decisive for this. Cf. König, *Offenbarungsbegriff*, ii. 178 f.—זנונים, plur. of abstractness, like נאפופים in ii. 4, from זנה, used of an unmarried harlot or unchaste wife, and often applied to Israel's conduct to God. —*Children of whoredom* (cf. on ch. v. 7). The reference is to those enumerated in ver. 3 ff., whom she will bear to the prophet in wedlock, therefore not to any she already has (Kurtz, Keil). This object is subjoined by קח, as the verb is general: make thee such,—which may embrace marriage and begetting. Although born to the prophet, these children are so named because their mother was unfaithful in wedlock, and they possess her nature; the father therefore need not acknow-

following Yahveh! 3. And he went and took Gomer, Diblaim's daughter; and she conceived, and bare him a son. 4. Then said Yahveh to him, Call his name *Jezreel;* for yet a little while, and I will visit the bloodguiltiness of Israel on the house of Jehu, and make an end of the kingdom of the house of Israel. 5. And it shall come to pass on that day,

ledge them. Ver. 3. The name Gomer, daughter of Diblaim, introduced by את as that of a well-known person, does not seem to be formed with an allegorical meaning, as it is too obscure for this, nor is it explained. Unsatisfactory interpretations: "utter ruin" (Hengstenberg), "*consummata atque perfecta sc. in fornicatione*" (Jerome), "consummation" (in vice, Keil), "daughter of double fig-cake," which epithet is said to characterise her lustfulness (as in iii. 1), etc. Ver. 4. The first son is called, with an ominous play on Israel, *Jezreel, disperget Deus;* interpreted auspiciously in ii. 24 f.: *sparget*, i.e. *seminabit* (Delitzsch). This name is chosen with reference to the city where Jehu (instead of the name Judah, LXX) made his way to the throne through a great massacre, and before which also stretches a broad battlefield on which destiny was decided. That massacre is to be avenged on Jehu's dynasty, and so an end is to be made of the entire northern kingdom, which, unlike Judah (ver. 7), has no future. That sanguinary judgment Jehu had executed on Ahab's house (2 Kings ix. 14 ff.), at a prophet's instigation it is true (2 Kings ix. 1 ff.), and his act is therefore also expressly commended (2 Kings x. 30). But Jehu had so acted, as the rest of his conduct showed, not from obedience to God, but from ambition; and so his act was wicked. And as this spirit was transmitted to his descendants in heightened degree, that blood is reckoned to them. In Amos vii. 9 this dynasty is already threatened with death; Hosea announces its approaching destruction. Thus the same historical fact which, if it had proceeded from high motives, would have been praiseworthy as pleasing to God, may, if arising from other motives, be unpardonable sin in God's sight. With Hitzig we may also recall the fact, that on that occasion Jehu showed needless cruelty, not stopping at the slaughter of a Joram and a Jezebel, but slaying at Jezreel, in cold blood and without special order, Ahaziah and his brethren, and therefore members of the Davidic royal family (2 Kings ix. 27, x. 13 f.). Cf. also in 2 Kings x. 11 the extension of the massacre to all the friends of the ruling house. In any case there is no need, with Steiner, to ascribe to Hosea any other judgment on that act than to the author of the Book of Kings. Ver. 5. Nemesis overtakes

that I will break in pieces the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel. 6. Then she conceived again, and bare a daughter. Then he said unto him, Call her name *Unpitied;* for I will no longer continue to have pity on the house of Israel, that I should forgive them always. 7. But on the house of Judah I will have pity, and will save them through Yahveh their God; but not through bow and sword and battle, through horses and horsemen will I give them help. 8. And when she had weaned the "Unpitied," she conceived, and bare a son. 9. And he said, Call his name *Not my people;* for you are not my people, and I will not be yours.

Jehu and his army at the place where he sinned (cf. a striking example of such local retribution at the same Jezreel, 1 Kings xxi. 19). The reference is to a decisive battle on the great theatre (Judg. vi. 33; 1 Sam. xxix. 1), where *Israel's bow*, i.e. its martial power (the bow was the dreaded weapon by which also Jehu arrived at power, 2 Kings ix. 24) is broken in pieces. Yet the emphasis lies here, not on the locality, but on the ominous sound of its name. Ver. 6. The *Unpitied One;* yet לא רחמה is not to be taken as part. Pual (מְ being dropped). The accentuation and the connection with לֹא (which is very rare with participles and infinitives) show that it is 3 sing. fem. perf., therefore strictly, "She who is not pitied." According to Hitzig, women as such would be objects of compassion (Isa. ix. 17). Yet this does not sufficiently explain why the second child in particular is a daughter—which rather points to an actual occurrence. — אוסיף א׳ ע׳, Gesen. § 142, 3*b*.— Compassion would consist in continued forgiveness. נישא with לְ cannot have a hostile sense (contrary to LXX). Ver. 7. Judah also needs forgiving compassion and help in the approaching peril (Assyria); and will experience it when it seeks it in the right place. — Through *Jahveh their God;* whereas Israel can no longer call Him *its* God, according to ver. 9, He will save them, not, as they are inclined to think, by outward defensive warfare (the general מלחמה has the latter meaning, as in ii. 20, Ps. lxxvi. 4). This was incessantly emphasised afterwards by Isaiah; and the defeat of Sennacherib before Jerusalem brought a glorious fulfilment of this saying of Hosea. Cf. Isa. xxxi. 8 f., xxxvii. 21 ff., vii. 9, xxii. 8 ff., xxx., xxxi., etc. Ver. 9. The high privilege conferred by God on Israel in entering into a relation of mutual possession with

II. 1. And the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And it shall come to pass, instead of its being said to them, "You are not my people," they shall be called "Sons of the living God." 2. And the sons of Judah and the sons of Israel shall gather together, and shall appoint themselves one head, and go up out of the land; for—great is the day of *Jezreel!* 3. Say ye to your brethren, "*My people;*" and to your sisters, "*Pitied One!*"

it (Ex. vi. 7; Jer. xxxi. 33; Ezek. xvi. 8), it has made light of; God no longer calls it עַמִּי, and so it can no longer say אֱלֹהַי (ii. 25).—היה with לְ, to belong to some one.

Chapter II.

Ver. 1. Despite all sin and punishment, the patriarchal promise remains in force, pointing to a countless progeny which Jacob is to have, Gen. xxxii. 13; cf. Abraham, Gen. xv. 5, xxii. 17, etc. The second והיה, verb of fore-ordination in the prophetic perfect, as in Joel iii. 1, and often in important moments of prophecy.—במקם, not in local sense (in allusion to Canaan, cf. Jer. vii. 3), but in logical sense, like the more moral תַּחַת by which Kimchi here paraphrases it.—אמר includes the objective state of things acknowledged by every one. As they are now known and recognised as aliens from God, so then they will be acknowledged as children of the true God who reveals Himself as living. The pentateuchal relation, according to which the nation as a whole is God's son (Ex. iv. 22, cf. Hos. xi. 1), is here transferred individually to its several members, who are called sons of this God. Ver. 2. That happy future brings reunion of the divided nation by spontaneous subjection under *one head*, of course a Davidic King (iii. 5). Cf. Amos ix. 11 f.; and later, Isa. xi. 1 ff., 13; Jer. xxiii. 5 f.; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, xxxvii. 15 ff.—ועלו, to go up, advance to battle, as the sequel shows: a decisive battle of happy issue is at hand, when the Lord will acknowledge His people. This scene also is assigned to the plain of Jezreel, that this name may be again a good omen. Ver. 3. In the same way the second and third names are turned round into a good sense. The suffix in עמי can only, according to ch. i. and ii. 1, apply to God (against Hitzig). They are to greet and acknowledge one another, not merely as fellow-countrymen,

4. Contend with your mother, contend! For she is not my wife, and I am not her husband; and let her remove her harlotry from her face, and her adultery from her breasts; 5. lest I strip her naked, and set her as in the day when she was born; and I will make her like the wilderness, and set her like a parched land, and kill her with thirst. 6. And on her children I will have no pity; for they are children of whoredom. 7. For their mother has played the harlot; she that bare them has done shamefully: for she said, I will run

but as members of God's people (whom God calls עמי), and forgiven by God. Ver. 4 glances back at the actual state, which is still so far removed from that ideal aim. In order to escape from the present corruption, the children of such a marriage, who yet stand nearer to the father than the mother does, must reject the latter (certainly a new anomaly); *i.e.* the individual members of the nation, who are here appealed to, as reformation must proceed from them, have to exert a corrective, reforming influence on the corrupt aggregate by convincing it first of all of its unfaithfulness to God. In keeping with the personification underlying the passage, the matter is put thus: the mother must remove unchaste glances from her face and adulterous tokens from her breast.—נאפופים, here only, from נאף, cf. on i. 2. Perhaps the allusion is to amulets worn on the breast in honour of the gods, and as a protection; as a lover wears her pledge as token of affection (Cant. i. 13). Ver. 5. If she does not reform, her rightful lord and husband will abandon her to shame and misery. In this threat the ideas of an adulteress punished with infamy, and of a land exposed by God to shame, merge into one, the intention being to hold up before the land the fate of such a woman. See similar descriptions later in Jer. xiii. 26; Ezek. xvi. 35 ff., xxiii. 45 ff. To the disgraceful stripping off the clothes corresponds, in the case of the land, the fearful drought, spoken of already by Joel and Amos, by which God strips it of all beauty and strength, all glory and delight. When the Lord withdraws His blessing from the most fruitful of lands, remitting it to its *pura naturalia*, it becomes like a desert. Ver. 6. The judgment, *they are children of whoredom*, refers to the spirit which they show; unless they seek to bring their mother into better ways, she will involve them in her misfortune. Ver. 7. The new כִּי confirms the corruption of the mother inherited by them; the third כִּי states in what it consists.—הוביש, as if from יבש, Hiphil of בוש, to practise shameful

after my paramours, who give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, my oil and my spiced drinks. 8. Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and build a wall for her, that she shall not find her paths. 9. And she shall pursue her paramours, and shall not overtake them; and shall seek them, and shall not find them: and she shall say, I will arise and return to my former husband; for then it was better with me than now. 10. Yet she knew not that I gave her the wheat, and the

things, like הֲבִישׁ, Prov. x. 5.—הורה, properly act. part. fem.: *mulier concipiens*, a not unworthy phrase for mother; see Cant. iii. 4. She ascribed the Lord's gifts to false gods, especially nature deities, and courted their favour. These are called her *paramours*, as in Ezek. xvi. 33 and elsewhere, because she was drawn away by them from her rightful husband. She thought she received from them the most necessary means of support (bread and wine), as well as clothing material (wool and flax), and the finest luxuries (oil and spiced drinks). Ver. 8. לכן introduces the penal sentence, which is also a gracious counsel: God will hem in her steps by a hedge, yea a wall, and so render impossible her activity in serving the gods. The vivid language passes into the second person, but at once returns to the third.—שׂוך, to hedge round (Job i. 10), in meaning like סכך, Hiphil, Job iii. 23.—גדרה has ה *raphatum pro mappiqat.*, i.e. suff. combined with גָּדֵר, so properly build her wall, *i.e.* a wall for her (dat. incomm.), around or before her. גדרה is the reading of the Cod. Babylon., Complutens. text, and many editions. Hitzig, Delitzsch, Nowack interpret in harmony with this reading. How God will restrain her walk, ver. 11 ff. show. Ver. 9. Her zealous following of the false gods (cf. ch. v. 6 as to its method) will be fruitless; but her sad outward condition will drive her to reflection and repentance, as his wretchedness did the prodigal son, Luke xv. 17. Ver. 10 emphasises once more the gross error which led her astray. It was lack of deeper knowledge of the Giver, and of thankful recognition of the divine benefits. According to Rom. i. 21 this is the root of all heathenism. *Which* (silver and gold) *they used for Baal*, according to 2 Chron. xxiv. 7, *i.e.* in his honour, to adorn his worship. The reference is not merely to actual images of this god, which Jehu rooted out (2 Kings x. 26 f.), but also to the golden calves, in which the prophet can only see Baal images, not

oil, and multiplied to her the silver and the gold, which they used for Baal. 11. Therefore I will take away again my wheat in its time, and my new wine in its season, and will withdraw my wool and my flax, (which was) for the covering of her nakedness. 12. Yea, now will I discover her filthiness before the eyes of her paramours, and none shall pluck her out of my hand. 13. And I make an end of all her merriment, her yearly feasts, her new moons, her Sabbaths, and all her solemnities. 14. And I will lay waste her vine and her fig-tree, of which she said, They are my present which my paramours gave me; and will make them a forest, and the

Yahveh. But we must not translate: "which they made with Baal" (Hitz., Now.), which is forbidden by the sing. with article. Ver. 11. לבן, parallel with the same word in ver. 8, cf. ver. 16. His gifts, to which man thinks he has a permanent right, because of their regular recurrence, the Lord will take back (Gesen. § 142, 3*a*), in order to prove that He is the sole Giver. *In its time*, i.e. at the time when it should appear.—לכסות, subordinate to the two preceding substantives. Ver. 12. Cf. on ver. 5.—"The frequent use of עַתָּה to announce punishment following immediately, as here and iv. 16, v. 7, viii. 10, 13, x. 2 f., cf. viii. 8, or even to indicate that the measure of sin is filled up (v. 3, vii. 2), is part of Hosea's idiomatic distinctiveness" (Delitzsch). נבלות (here only) from נֵבֶל, *spurcities*, *obscenitas*, synon. with ערוה. In the case of the *paramours*, the idea of foreign gods suggests that of foreign nations. *Before their eyes* the hatefulness of the unfaithful one is discovered, so that they lose the desire for her company; and none of those, to whom she has clung, will help her.—Worldly, impure desire always comes to such a shameful end when it is stripped of the fair dress stolen from God. Ver. 13. The first כל belongs to all the following substantives, and is repeated with the last one, because the most general. In the religious feasts the dallying with heathenism found its fullest exercise and its most splendid expression (ver. 15).—חג, a yearly recurring feast like the Passover, Pentecost, etc. מועדו sums up the preceding. Ver. 14. *Vine* and *fig-tree*, along with the olive (ver. 10), the noblest growths of the land, often named together as in Joel i. 7. These two, or their produce, she regards as a gift of those gods; and indeed it is called a paramour's gift (אתנה here only, from תנה, ch. viii. 9, like the more frequent אתנן from תנן), because she regards it as a

wild beast of the field shall devour them. 15. Thus I visit on her the days of the Baals, when she burnt incense to them, and put on her nose-ring and her necklet, and ran after her paramours, but me she forgot, is Yahveh's oracle. 16. Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and cause her to go into the wilderness, and will speak to her heart; 17. and I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a

return for that forbidden love. Ver. 15. The *days*=feast-days of the *Baals*. Although Baal was originally one being, it readily divided into different forms, partly by the moral qualities which were distinguished in this general deity, and expressed by epithets like Baal Berith, etc.; partly by the different localities where this deity was worshipped, and not least by the images under which it was worshipped. (Cf. the varieties of Mary-cultus, in which miracles are ascribed to the Mary of a particular place.)—קטר, Hiphil, same in meaning here as Piel in iv. 13; see Jer. i. 16.—She, *i.e.* still the personified community, has decked herself out coquettishly to show all honour to the gods, and therewith to indulge the lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh. *Nose-ring*, see Isa. iii. 21.—חליה here only, formed from חֶלְיִי. Ver. 16. The third לכן introduces a mere hint of the punishment to be looked for; and, on the other hand, a full-toned promise of the salvation to which the suffering will be a mere stage of transition. God allures the apostate one into the *wilderness*, and she goes there half-willingly (the parallel of the exit from Egypt influences the mode of expression). The *wilderness* is here the place of poverty, sorrow, and helplessness, where God can again draw nigh to and comfort her; the land of punishment, where she comes to her senses, corresponding to the far country in the parable of the Prodigal, the *exile*.—פתה, Piel, in meaning=πείθω, persuade. God brings her into misfortune—for her salvation. —דבר על לב (like Syriac *mlâ lbebâ*), cf. Gen. xxxiv. 3 (in a love affair), Judg. xix. 3 (of friendly representations to a runaway wife), to speak in a winning, encouraging way. Ver. 17. When in the wilderness she has come to herself, all will be forgiven and forgotten. As formerly under Moses, she receives back her land as the fruit of the new covenant of love, coming out of the wilderness into the possession of vineyards. The *valley of Achor* (vale of tribulation), from which formerly Israel penetrated, after Achan's sin was expiated, without hindrance into Canaan (Josh. vii. 25 f.), becomes again an entrance-gate disclosing joyous prospects.—ועכור

door of hope. And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, and as at the time when she went up out of the land of Egypt. 18. And it shall come to pass on that day, is Yahveh's oracle, that thou shalt call me "My husband," and thou shalt no longer call me "My Baal." 19. And I take away the names of the Baals out of her mouth, and they shall be no more mentioned by their name. 20. And I make a covenant for them on that day with the wild beast of the field, and the birds of the heavens, and whatever creeps on the earth; and bow and sword and battle I will destroy out of the land, and so I make them rest in safety. 21. And I will

neither from ענה, to be bowed down (LXX, ταπεινωθήσεται), nor from ענה, to feign (?); but in the sense: *to answer*, of the corresponding response which the challenge of Yahveh receives on her part. A more easy reading would be וְעָלְתָה, but far less expressive and less in keeping with Hosea's style, who is constantly emphasising the reciprocal nature of love.—שָׁפָּה, see Ezek. xlviii. 35. Ver. 18. She is anxious then to avoid all ambiguity in speech, so as not to annoy her God. This bears on the hitherto common use of בעל as an appellative (E. König, *Hauptprobleme*, p. 35 f.) to designate Yahveh, from which may be explained the use of the word in Israelitish proper names, like Eshbaal, 1 Chron. viii. 33. This mode of speech is hateful to Yahveh, because it has contributed to pervert the worship of Yahveh and cloak that of Baal, bringing Yahveh into connection with the deity which the heathen so named. In every age ambiguous language has helped to distort religion. Ver. 19. But as the nation shall no longer call Yahveh its Baal, so shall it no longer take the names of the heathen Baals into its lips; cf. Zeph. i. 4; Zech. xiii. 2. Ver. 20. Next, God on His part provides complete safety from evil beasts and hostile men. With the former,—beasts and birds of prey, and deadly reptiles like serpents, etc.,—God, in a sense, makes an agreement that they injure not His people, imposing it as an obligation on them; an instructive transference of the notion to the irrational creation, which shows that such a "covenant" does not imply equality of the parties.—In a similar way the nations must perforce leave Israel in peace.—*Frangam e terra* pregnantly for *frangam et ejiciam e terra*. Cf. Lev. xxvi. 3–6, and Isaiah's prophecies of a peace of creation (xi. 6 ff.) and of nations, ii. 2 ff., ix. 4, etc. Ver. 21 f. The inner ground of such blessedness is disclosed, consisting in a pure, inviolable

betroth thee to me for ever, and will betroth thee to me in righteousness and judgment, and in love and compassion; 22. and will betroth thee to me in constancy; and thou shalt know Yahveh! 23. And it shall come to pass on that day, that I will answer, is Yahveh's oracle, I will answer the

covenant of love with the Lord.—אָרַשׂ, Piel (thrice solemnly repeated), used of the man who *betroths* to himself a virgin (Deut. xx. 7, xxviii. 30); here of union in an eternal, intimate covenant of love. This union is consummated by the attributes introduced by בְּ, which become the possession of the community. Righteousness, etc., are not merely gifts of the divine suitor, by which he secures a right in his bride, but just as much her future adornment, through which such a complete and lasting union is brought about, whereas hitherto these were the virtues lacking to her (iv. 1 f., v. 11, vi. 4 f., x. 4, 12, xii. 7): *righteousness* (צֶדֶק) and *love* (חסד), of which the former is expressed and exercised in *judgment* (משפט), right utterance, and normal action; the latter in *proofs of compassion* (רחמים). Certainly צדק does not refer merely to judicial righteousness, but to that faultless divine spirit which aims at what is good, and which man will inherit from Him. He desires man's welfare; but certainly, as this word in distinction from חסד suggests, in inviolable harmony with His holy, perfect nature. See more fully Orelli's *O. T. Prophecy*, p. 234. Ver. 22. אמונה, see on Hab. ii. 4. *Constancy*, the golden ring holding God's attributes together, will also maintain this covenant, so that it will continue without change.—The climax of fellowship with God is the *knowledge of Yahveh*, intimate, of course not merely intellectual, apprehension of the divine nature, by which alone that nature becomes the possession of men. As God has long known Israel (xiii. 5), so Israel will know Him, *i.e.* through love see into the very ground of His nature. This state of spiritual oneness is the supreme fruit of restored harmony with God's will and authority; and also the strongest, most fruitful root from which a holy life can grow. Ver. 23 ff. The reaction of this harmonious unity on nature is described: disorders will all cease. Everything in creation is knit together in loving service, with a view to making His people happy; one thing *answers* another, *hears* its petition. Neither does God restrain the clouds, nor these the rain, nor the earth its plants, nor these their fruit. Rain appears here as the essential condition of growth; for it in the East all creation often sighs, and its absence means unrest and discomfort to all creatures.

heavens, and they shall answer the earth; 24. and the earth shall answer the wheat and the new wine and the oil; and they shall answer "*Jezreel;*" 25. and I will sow her to me in the land, and will pity the "*Unpitied One,*" and to "*Not my people*" will say, "Thou art my people;" and it shall say, "My God!"

III. 1. And Yahveh said to me, Go once more, love a woman beloved of her husband, yet an adulteress, even as Yahveh loves the children of Israel, but they lean to other gods and love raisin-cakes! 2. And I bought her to me for fifteen shekels of silver, and a homer and a half of barley.

Ver. 24. Israel is here again called *Jezreel*, because the name will yield a good omen in this finale, where even the two other evil names are once more, and finally, changed into blessing.

Chapter III.

Ver. 1. עוֹד introduces an action analogous to the one related in ch. i. Again a marriage bond is to be formed with an unworthy person, who represents Israel. The view that this woman is the Gomer of ch. i. 3 (Ewald, v. Hofmann, Kurtz, Nowack), is precluded by the general expression. It is also inexplicable why the prophet should buy his own wife, ver. 2.—רֵעַ does not refer to an illegal paramour (so most expositors), but, as in Jer. iii. 20, to the husband, answering to "as Yahveh loves the children of Israel." Although beloved of her husband, she follows forbidden courses.—*Raisin-cakes* plainly played a part in the heathen worship of Israel; cf. Jer. vii. 18. Dainties, such as are to be found there, have bewitched her, and for them she gives up—what spiritual blessings! Ver. 2. ואכרה (*dagesh dirimens*, Gesen. § 20, 2*b*). The expression is ignoble (elsewhere the suitor gives a מֹהַר); the price low, such as was paid for slaves; the name of the woman, who is treated like a thing, is not so much as mentioned; *I bought her*=such an one. The unworthiness of the person was therefore, in any case, known to him beforehand. On the measures, cf. Ezek. xlv. 11 ff. The average price of a slave, not put high, was thirty silver shekels, Ex. xxi. 32. If an ephah of barley (the cheapest grain) cost one shekel, which according to 2 Kings vii. 1, 16 (where two-thirds of an ephah cost one shekel) was not impossible, the entire value was exactly thirty shekels; for לתך (here only) is *corus dimidius,*

3. And I said to her, Many days thou shalt sit still for me without playing the harlot, and without belonging to a husband; and so (will) I also (bear myself) toward thee. 4. For many days shall the children of Israel sit without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without carved pillar, and without ephod and teraphim. 5. After-

ἡμίχορος (half a chor or homer=5 ephahs), according to Jerome and the Greek versions except LXX, in whom the text is corrupt. Ver. 3 gives the distinctive feature of this chapter as supplementing the former ones; the prophet is to take measures to prevent the unfaithful one from following her inclinations, therefore compel her to abstain from vice. She must be shut up, must sit under guard, not be allowed to have anything to do with any man. — וגם אני א׳, difficult. The positive interpretation, "and I also will hold myself for thee," which seems the most obvious, does not suit the case, for it cannot apply to a later time (ver. 5). Maurer hits the meaning: neque etiam ego tecum rem habebo. But the borrowing of the לא would be very harsh. It is best co-ordinated with לא תהיה לאיש, thou shalt have to do with no man, and I also will so bear myself toward thee, *i.e.* refrain from intercourse with thee. Similarly Hitzig, Nowack. Ver. 4. Justification of the symbolic action by God's future dealing with Israel, which in exile for a long time will have no opportunity for worship and divine intercourse, unlawful as well as lawful, so far as worship is bound to outward means and acts.—*Sit still*, namely as captives, as the context shows. The *sons of Israel* are the northern tribes.—אין, properly substantive in the accus.=בְּאֵין.—*Without king*, the chief personage in the matter of worship also, and in the northern kingdom only too influential from the time of Jeroboam I. All the means and instruments of their God-offending worship shall be taken from them.—מצבה, pillar; here, as often, statue of a god.—אפוד, the priestly *shoulder-cloth*, which was used in uttering oracles like the *teraphim* (Ezek. xxi. 26); according to others a clothed idol (cf. אֲפֻדָּה, Isa. xxx. 22, and the στολιστής in the Egyptian priesthood), as in some passages אפוד seems to have this meaning. Cf., however, E. König, *Hauptprobleme*, pp. 59 ff., 69 f. When all this pomp vanishes, delight in foreign religions will pass away of itself. Ver. 5. Fruit of this forced detention: they will return with eager longing to Yahveh and to *David*, their rightful king, cf. ii. 2. The reference is to the king of this house reign-

ward the children of Israel shall return and seek Yahveh their God, and David their king; and they shall come trembling to Yahveh and to his goodness at the end of the days.

Exposition.

Contents of chs. i.–iii. Opening: Yahveh's Marriage-covenant with His People. 1. The Curse turned into Blessing, chs. i., ii.: *a.* The existing Discord represented by the Prophet in person, ch. i.; *b.* The Lord's Plan for a blessed union with His people, ch. ii. 2. The Reform of the Adulteress by force, represented by the Prophet, ch. iii.

Despite much discussion, no agreement has been arrived at as to whether the marriage of the prophet Hosea, related in ch. i. 3, more accurately the two marriage connections which he contracted at Yahveh's bidding, in order to exhibit symbolically the relation between God and Israel, belong to concrete reality or not. At present, as from early days, there are, with certain variations, two opposing views.

1. What is related is nothing that occurred outwardly, but an allegorical dress. So D. Kimchi, Calvin, and most of the Reformed Church; among moderns, Maurer, Hitzig, Hengstenberg, Hävernick, Simson, Keil, Wünsche, Reuss, *et al.*, of whom, however, several suppose an inner experience of the

ing in the last days. That he will be a king of extraordinary gifts and power like David, is implied in the nature of the case and in the phraseology. Passages like Jer. xxx. 9, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, xxxvii. 24, are similar in tenor.—The *scriptio plena* דויד is surprising in so old a writing. Yet the Cod. Babyl. reads דָּוִד.—5*b* beautifully describes the mingled feelings with which they return; impelled by joyous desire, they yet feel a trembling anxiety at the remembrance of their unworthiness; cf. xi. 10 and Ps. ii. 11.—טובו, concretely: the good he bestows, salvation, fulness of blessing; cf. Jer. xxxi. 12, 14; Ps. xxxi. 19; Neh. ix. 25.—*At the end of the days*, an idea relating to things rather than time, marking the limit of the horizon, the conclusion of the period which the seer has in view; cf. Orelli, *O. T. Prophecy*, p. 33.

prophet in vision; so Kimchi, Calvin, and Hengstenberg, who enters into elaborate argument. It is no proof of this allegorical interpretation to say that the concrete carrying out of such a marriage by the prophet would have been repulsive, that the actions involved in ch. i. would have covered a series of years, and therefore their significance would not have been really apprehended by the people; that the forming of a new relation of the same kind, iii. 1, without regard to the previous one, would have been doubly incomprehensible on moral grounds. None of these reasons are tenable. If the acts described are morally wrong, God could not have suggested them to the prophet, even in vision; nay, the prophet could not have invented them for didactic ends. His narrative could only make any impression at all, if the hearers regarded its contents as real. But it is quite inconceivable that the prophet should have related such things if his married life was happy, if his partner was a thoroughly honourable housewife. If, on the contrary, his domestic peace was sorely disturbed by his wife's unfaithfulness, Hosea had painful experience in his own person of what Israel had done to Yahveh; and, at the same time, he could always hold that scandal in his house up before the people, who doubtless watched it only too carefully, as a sign, the deeper reason of which lay in the ominous unfaithfulness of the community to Yahveh. As in Isaiah's case (see Orelli's *Commentary on Isaiah*, p. 2), along with his wife and his children, who are named by prophetic inspiration, he was a living mirror, in which the nation could always read the character of its relation to God.

2. In harmony with the connection elsewhere observable between the experiences of the prophets and their predictions, the preference is due altogether to the realistic explanation, which sees in the events narrated by Hosea actual experiences from his domestic life. So most of the Fathers (Theodoret, Cyril of Alex., Augustine, *et al.*), the early

Lutherans; among moderns, J. H. Kurtz (*Die Ehe des proph. Hosea*, Dorpat 1859), v. Hofmann (*Weiss. u. Erf.* i. 206 ff.), Nowack, Delitzsch, *et al.* It is not impossible that a certain freedom obtains in the delineation, a supposition which makes some details more intelligible; *e.g.* Ewald may be right in thinking that Hosea first learned that his marriage was originally designed to represent the discord in question when his wife, whom he perhaps took by prophetic suggestion, proved unfaithful (ch. i.), so that an unfortunate marriage was not in his mind from the first. As, according to several defenders of the realistic explanation, ch. iii. cannot refer to the same wife as ch. i. (see on iii. 1), we might here, most probably, conjecture that the picture has been spontaneously sketched by the prophet, who was familiarised with that prophetic form of representation by the experiences of ch. i., in order to illustrate another special feature. But even the formation of this second relation is by no means inconceivable, as Gomer, after the way in which she was spoken of in ch. i. 3, had probably died, and the relation described in ch. iii. has, from the first, a pædagogic or corrective purpose; and therefore, to the prophet, a repulsive, yet not unworthy, act is suggested. At all events, Ewald goes too far in explaining away the historical kernel, and Umbreit still further. Not only the name of the woman, i. 3 (see there), but also the order of the children (see on i. 6), is plainly historical, and the circumstances in iii. 2 may be so. The objection that the second wife (iii. 2) is disturbing, because in the application only one can be referred to, affects the theory of allegorical invention still more than that of an actual occurrence.

Chs. i. and ii. are closely connected. Abrupt as is the appearance of the promise in ii. 1 f., it still supplies the indispensable counterpart to ch. i.; and this second chapter, as its transformation of the evil names, Jezreel, Lo Ruhama, etc. (ii. 1 ff., 25), shows, forms the completion of the prophecy

of ch. i. The peculiar form of the symbolic acts in ch. i. is explained, as in the kindred ch. iii., by two presuppositions.

1. The covenant between Yahveh and Israel is a covenant of love, corresponding to the most intimate and tender covenant on earth, that between married persons, which rests not merely on an instinct of nature (like the relation of father and son), or a legal state (like that of master and servant), but on spontaneous, reciprocal inclination. Hosea is not the first to present the covenant of God with Israel in this way; on the contrary, the conception belongs to the Mosaic age; it underlies the saying in the Decalogue about the "jealous God" (Ex. xx. 5; Deut. v. 9), and the ancient phrase "to play the harlot with strange gods" (Ex. xxxiv. 15 f., and often in Pentat.). But Hosea, "the minnesinger among the prophets" (Delitzsch), has worked out the analogy most completely and profoundly. It is true that in this comparison in the Old Testament the element of spontaneous affection is subordinate to the emphasis laid on the wife's legal dependence on the husband, to whom she owes perfect fidelity, in correspondence both with the ancient theory of marriage and also with the more legal character, compared with the new covenant, of the Old Testament relation between Yahveh and Israel. But in this very respect Hosea did not a little towards spiritualising the relation, and opened a glimpse into the depth of the gospel purpose of love. He is never weary of insisting that the covenant relation, to be true and pure, must also be tender and intimate, a relation of mutual love and cordial inclination springing from internal fellowship and affinity (cf. ii. 17, 18, 21 f., 25). Now the purer and tenderer this divine covenant is seen to be, the more dreadful appears the present alliance with heathen forms: hateful treason, nay adultery! How can Israel be brought to see that it has sinned against its God? This is done on the basis of a second presupposition.

2. Over against the community the prophet represents

the Lord Himself, whose spokesman he is. What is to be seen in him is therefore significant, an image of God's doing. It is thus easily explained that the prophet's sad experiences with his wife and children present themselves to himself through divine intimation, and to his community through his preaching, as experiences of God with His people. Only when they are confronted with such a scandal in the life of the prophet, will they believe and understand how blameworthy is their conduct to the holy God. The nation must recognise itself in that "wife of whoredom;" the several members of the nation, who, as such share in the universal guilt and sinfulness, must see their counterpart in those children whose very names proclaim their severance from God.

The fact that in ch. ii. 1 f. the happy goal of God's dealings with His people is set forth so abruptly, has its inner ground in this, that the cause of the transformation is to be sought in the Lord's incomprehensible mercy, which wondrously carries out its purpose despite all the hindrances caused by sin (Rom. xi. 29). In keeping with the line of thought in Isa. ii.–iv., the agency to be used follows in ii. 3 ff. The goal is the restoration of the people of God, who, united again under the Lord's anointed one, will triumph over the hostile world-power. The intimation that here, also, the decisive victory is won on the battle-plain of Jezreel (ii. 2), shows that the name is used typically, and that in ch. i. 5 also it must not be pressed to mean that the prophet definitely expects a victory of the Assyrians over Israel on that plain, as Hitzig thinks. Next, in ch. ii. 3 ff., the way is described in which the Lord will bring about the subjective condition of the curse being turned into blessing. The faithless nation will only be brought to repentance under the pressure of bitter suffering, in which it will find itself deserted by its supposed benefactors, the foreign nature-gods; the suffering will drive it back to its true benefactor, its

rightful God; or, as the same leading thought is put in another form, God will bring it again into the wilderness, and will there woo and win its heart (which wonderful condescension on His part is expressed in the renewed soliciting of the love of the unworthy adulteress). Then He will be able to bring it again into the promised land. A new springtime of love will burst forth, the Lord uniting Himself for ever with His holy bride in a new covenant of closest fellowship. To the perfect understanding between the Lord of heaven and earth and His people will then correspond the unruffled harmony of all creation, which will tend to His people's good.

In ch. iii. 1 ff. the state of constraint, in which God places Israel for its correction, is further illustrated by a second series of symbolic acts, setting forth still more plainly the exile, when the people will be deprived of the opportunity of carrying on their previous idolatrous practices. Then they will reflect on their former wellbeing, and return to their rightful king, David, and their God, full of contrition and of longing for His salvation. This will be the end.

As regards the fulfilment, Hosea shows himself a true prophet, seeing that the house of Jehu fell after a few years, and after a few decades the inhabitants of the northern land went into exile; whereas Judah was spared for a time, thanks to God's wondrous help (ch. i. 7), in order finally, in like manner, to take the course sketched by the prophet, and, in exile, to be purged from its idolatry. But all this forms merely the foreground of the Hosean prediction, its climax lies in the promise that God will yet fully and completely realise His purpose of love in His covenant people. The national limitation of God's people is, no doubt, left behind by the New Testament fulfilment referred to in Rom. ix. 25 f., 1 Pet. ii. 10,—a fulfilment worthy of the mysteriously bold words in ii. 21 f.; the heathen come into the foreground, the Lo Ammi, etc., applying to them in the fullest sense. But the end of the days, in regard to Israel's history,

has not yet come, and an ultimate national turning of this people to its Lord and Messiah is not excluded by the admission of the heathen. On the contrary, such an event is suggested even to Christian thought by prophecies like Hos. ii., iii. 5; and Rom. xi. expressly demands that this shall be the end of Israel's wanderings.

Hosea's Discourses: Israel Accused and Threatened, Ch. iv.

IV. 1. Hear the word of Yahveh, ye sons of Israel: for Yahveh has a contention with the inhabitants of the land; for there is no truthfulness, or love, or knowledge of God in the land. 2. They swear and deceive, they murder and steal and commit adultery; they deal violently, and bloodshed touches bloodshed. 3. Therefore shall the land wither,

Chapter IV.

Ver. 1. Solemn summons to *listen*, the accuser, speaking by the prophet's mouth, being no less than Yahveh Himself, who appears against the *sons of Israel*, i.e. the inhabitants of the northern kingdom, which is meant by *the land*. The reason of the accusation is introduced by the second כִּי.—The accusation advances from without inward: אֱמֶת, trustworthiness, uprightness, truthfulness in intercourse. The complete absence of this virtue is the consequence of universal *want of love*. חֶסֶד, love, especially to the weak and poor, such as belongs to God (ch. ii. 21), here humanity. But the final reason why all true virtue is lacking, is the want of *knowledge of God*, which, of course, is to be understood here not merely in the theoretical sense, but in the sense of inner ethical participation in the divine nature; cf. ii. 22; Isa. xi. 9. Ver. 2. Instead of this, the vice which is the opposite of אמת and חסד grows apace, which is expressed by infin. absolutes; cf. Jer. vii. 9.—אלה וכחֵשׁ are closely related = to take and break oaths lightly. פרצו, not to be joined with the preceding verbs (so LXX, Vulg.), but to be taken by itself; cf. פָּרִיץ (differently in ver. 10). Pools of blood, testifying of violent deeds, lie not here and there, but close together. Ver. 3. אבל, said of the land, has a similar

and everything dwelling therein languish, with the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven; yea, even the fishes of the sea shall be swept away. 4. But let none chide, nor any one remonstrate; as thy people is like those who chide with the priest! 5. So wilt thou stumble on that day, and the prophet also shall fall with thee in the night, and I will destroy thy mother. 6. My people is destroyed, because knowledge fails it; for thou hast scorned knowledge, and I will scorn thee from being a priest to me;

meaning to the related אכל, and refers to the drought, which may have already set in, but must still further increase.—ב in בחית, etc., specifying in detail as in Gen. vii. 21, or still better indicating the accompaniment, as כל יושב must yet above all refer to men (Delitzsch). Ver. 4. Bad as things are, the people accept no correction, which is yet a duty in itself (ii. 4), and a necessity for the prophet (cf. as to the matter, Amos vii. 10 ff.). So passionately does the nation refuse all reproof, whilst on the other hand it cavils at everything and recognises no authority. The latter is expressed in a similar way to the injustice of the princes of Judah, ch. v. 10, namely, by putting the people in the category of those guilty of a notorious crime. Such a crime, according to Deut. xvii. 9–12, is the disregarding the torah of the priest. In the quite general "those who chide with the priest" (genit. obj.) there is no allusion to the inadequacy of the Ephraimite priesthood. The correct explanation of the verse is held and defended at length by Nowack, who rightly rejects the emendations of Hermann, Beck, Wellhausen. Ver. 5. Israel is addressed as in ver. 4 (עמך). So thou art hastening, paying no heed to instruction and warning, to meet thy sudden fall, which will take place on *that day* (of judgment, cf. Amos viii. 9), which is a gloomy *night*, so that even thy *prophets*, to whom everything is clear, and in whom thou trustest, fall helplessly in the darkness.—*And I destroy* (דמה, properly to adjust, wipe out, used of destroying a nation's separate existence) *thy mother*, *i.e.* the root-stock of thy people, in distinction from the present generation. Where are the ten tribes to be found? Ver. 6. נִדְמוּ in מובלי in causal sense. Just Nemesis falls on the nation trained for the priesthood by divine revelation, which it should have acknowledged and accepted (Ex. xix. 6).—ואמאסאך; the third א has crept in by mistake, and hence is not noticed in the vocalisation.—תורת, cf. on viii. 12. The view that the

and as thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I also will forget thy children. 7. As they were multiplied, they sinned against me; their glory will I change into unsightliness. 8. They feast on the sin of my people, and their desire is for its transgression. 9. And it has become, like people, like priest; so will I visit on it its ways, and requite to it its works. 10. And they eat, and shall not be satisfied: they play the harlot, and shall not increase; for they have neglected to pay heed to Yahveh. 11. Whoredom, and wine, and new wine,

priest is addressed in כי אתה (so even Nowack) is impossible; ver. 7 also plainly refers to the entire people. But history wonderfully confirms the nation's deposition from its priestly office. Ver. 7. *According to the size of their multitude* they sinned, *i.e.* the more there were of them, the more, etc. Now God will turn this wealth of people, which was Ephraim's glory, into the opposite. Ver. 8 refers, as the sense shows, to the *priests* first expressly mentioned in ver. 9, to whom the *sin-offerings* (which therefore at this time formed already a considerable portion of the sacrifices) of the nation are only a welcome carousal, so that they longed for instead of mourning its transgressions. Thus the nation's sin forms their support, its guilt their gladness. חטאת signifies as well sin as sin-offering, so that the prophet might speak thus without explanation. See Nowack in opposition to Wellhausen, who would find the sin-offering and guilt-offering first in Ezekiel's days, and on this account explains this verse in the most forced manner. Ver. 9. והיה, not future: "Both shall fare equally ill" (Gen. xviii. 25), but = they are both equally bad. The double כְּ is explained by the nature of this preposition, which is properly like a noun (cf. Latin *instar*): nature of one is nature of the other. The emphasis here lying on the second member, the suffixes in עליו and לו may refer to the priests. According to Delitzsch they rather referred to the corrupt mass, consisting of priests and community. Ver. 10. In any case the plural verb refers, not merely to the priests (Hitzig, Nowack), but to the entire lustful mass. Blessing is withdrawn from their enjoyment. הזנו (Del.: the Hiphil intensive of the Kal, related to the latter as ἐκπορνεύειν to πορνεύειν), to be understood of literal unchastity as in ver. 11, which easily associated itself, according to ver. 14, with sensuous nature-worship.—פרץ as in Ex. i. 12. Ver. 11. Such sensual lust darkens the rational intelligence, of which the *heart* is re-

take away the heart. 12. My people inquires of its stock, and its staff must divine for it. For the spirit of whoredom leads astray, and they went a whoring from their God. 13. On the top of the mountains they offered sacrifice, and on the hills they burnt incense, beneath oaks, and poplars, and terebinths, because their shadow was so fair: therefore shall your daughters play the harlot, and your daughters-in-law commit adultery. 14. I will not punish your daughters because they play the harlot, or your daughters-in-law be-

garded as the seat; cf. Joel i. 5. It makes dull and stupid, so that a nation addicted to it is capable of any folly, of which an example is forthwith given in ver. 12. Ver. 12. שאל ב, standing expression for inquiring of Yahveh, Judg. i. 1, etc. *My* people (with painful emphasis) inquires of *its stock*, may apply, according to Hab. ii. 19, Jer. x. 3, to idolatrous images (cf. the teraphim, Ezek. xxi. 26); on the other hand, the second clause is in any case to be referred to rabdomancy. Divination by means of staves was an art much in vogue among the Babylonians and many ancient peoples, and according to the present passage was also at the time current in Israel (cf. Riehm, *Handwörterb.* p. 1728). For the *spirit of whoredom* (here again meant in a spiritual sense) *leads astray*, takes into wrong paths of all sorts. Cf. the consequences of unfaithfulness to God in Rom. ii. 21 ff. *So they played the whore away from their God*, see Ezek. xvi. 32. Ver. 13. This practice of idolatry in conjunction with Yahveh's worship was carried out on the *hills*, which in imitation of the Canaanites they wilfully chose as places of worship; and, indeed, on hills beautifully clothed with umbrageous trees, symbolic of vital energy, and so inviting to such nature-worship; cf. viii. 11; Jer. ii. 20. However, such a prohibition as Deut. xii. 2 is presupposed.—קטר, Jer. i. 16.—*Oaks, terebinths*, Isa. i. 29.—לבנה again in Gen. xxx. 37; there in any case the low, sweet gum-tree (*styrax officinalis*), so LXX; in the present passage perhaps rather the lofty *white poplar* (so LXX).—על בן, often misunderstood; to be joined with the next sentence, introducing the punishment which God inflicts on the men, as ver. 14 proves. Cf. similarly Amos vii. 17, where certainly misfortune drives to vice, not lust, as here. The men who are carried beyond the bounds of morality, while still expecting honourable conduct from their young women, are overtaken by just judgment in suffering gross shame through these. Ver. 14. The unchaste *harlots*

cause they commit adultery; for they themselves go aside with whores, and with consecrated harlots they offer sacrifice: and a people which takes no notice shall fall headlong. 15. If thou playest the harlot, O Israel, yet let not Judah transgress! So come not to Gilgal, and go not up to Beth-aven, and swear not, "As Yahveh lives!" 16. For, like an obstinate cow, Israel resists: now will Yahveh feed them

are afterwards called more definitely קדשות (cf. קְדֵשִׁים, male *hierodouloi*), the female servants of the temple, "consecrated" in the bad sense, who gave themselves up to all men in honour of the goddess Astarte. יפרדו, cf. ch. v. 6, *'am lô-yābin yillābēt* an axiomatic sentence like ver. 11. The unusual לבט chosen for the sake of the rhythm. Ver. 15. *Judah does not sin* (אשם, differently in ch. x. 2, xiv. 1) by participating in the seductive idolatries taking place close to its borders. *Gilgal*, according to Amos iv. 4, a chief seat of such worship, resorted to by Ephraimites, but probably also situated on Judæan territory, if it was really the Judæan or Benjamite Gilgal (Josh. iv. 19 ff.) in the vicinity of Jericho towards the Jordan, for the rest nearer that city (to-day, Tel Jeljul); its memorable past made it seem appropriate for a holy place; cf. xii. 12.—*Beth-Aven*, derisive nickname for *Bethel*, used since Amos (v. 5); Bethel—the well-known boundary city of Ephraim towards Judah, sacred since patriarchal days—these prophets call "house of worthlessness" instead of "house of God."—*And swear not*, etc. This exhortation is not easily intelligible, especially as spoken to the Judæans who were not so wicked, as they have a right to call Yahveh their God (ch. i. 7), and therefore also to swear by Him (Deut. vi. 13, x. 20; Jer. iv. 2). Addressed to Israel, they would mean that it must not mislead Judah by this oath by its God. But ver. 16 does not favour such an address. Hitzig sees in the last clause an allusion to the worship of the oath-well, Beersheba, which in Amos v. 5 (cf. viii. 14) stands alongside Gilgal and Bethel. But the expression would be too enigmatic without mention of the place. Yet Amos viii. 14 should be especially considered, suggesting that in the present passage a local oath is meant, namely, by the Yahveh imaged and revealing Himself in Bethel and Gilgal. Cf. also Nowack. Ver. 16. Nothing can be made of Israel; it must go into exile.—סרר, after the analogy of the strong verb for סָר, which is stronger than סוּר (to go back), to rear.—עתה, see on ii. 12. "Yahveh will find means to make the obstinate heifer, which will not wear the

like a lamb on a wide plain. 17. Ephraim is wedded to idols: let him alone! 18. Their drinking is at an end, then they commit whoredom; her shields are in love with shame. 19. The wind wraps her up in its train, and they shall be put to shame by their sacrifices.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. iv.: Israel Accused and Threatened.

What the opening (chs. i.–iii.), a "preface in large letters" (Ewald), has introduced, is expanded in the discourses proper which now follow. This first discourse sums up the accusation to be brought against Israel: profligacy, universal corruption, having its ground in estrangement from its Lord: gross sensuality, finding its food especially in the impure

yoke, quiet as a lamb; and the heifer, that will not plough the fields of its own country, shall roam like a tame lamb the wide plains of strangers" (Del.). Ver. 17. Cf. Isa. xliv. 11. "Israel is allied to idols, is their חֲבֵר; and this friendship is so close that there is no breaking it" (Del.).—הנח לו (Ex. xxxii. 10), let it alone! is said to Judah: Thou canst not mend Israel, thou wilt only be worse for its society. Ver. 18. When they have finished their carousing, they do still worse. We should expect the וְ of the apodosis before הזנה. But the clauses are thrown out disconnectedly in anger. Ewald, Keil, Del., Nowack, appealing to Jer. ii. 21: "Their revelling has grown worse." But the verb is too weak for this.—הבו, erased by many as a repetition (Ges. § 55, Anm. 3); it is rather to be combined with אהבו, erasing the ו: אֲהַבְהֲבוּ, as Pe'alal form, unless a division of the word is intended, so that the second word הֲבוּ would be a derisive popular abbreviation (from יְהַב or אָהַב), to set forth their foolish fondness.—The *shields* are the princes, as those who should guard the nation, watching over and representing its honour. Ver. 19. Hosea makes free with the suffixes, his course of thought being so rapid. Here (and end of ver. 18) he is thinking of the Church or nation, which is hurried into exile with the violence of a tempest.—צרר, to tie together, here to pack in the edges.—They *shall be put to shame in their sacrificial seasons* (זבחות here only for זבחים), see the uselessness of their entire sacrificial cultus.

rites of idol-worship, where priests and people indulge the flesh. Moreover, the judgment, which must follow on this account, is at once announced: the land must be desolate (ver. 3), the people go into exile (vers. 16, 19). If this applies in the first instance only to Israel-Ephraim, which the prophet can no longer hope to reform by his preaching, he also shows himself anxious about Judah, which is only too open to the impure worship, which is the root of all the evil, and is already deeply infected by it (ver. 15). As concerns the date of this address, it falls somewhat later than ch. i., but still perhaps in the last years of Jeroboam II. Most writers place its origin, as in those which follow, in the confusions which ensued on his death.

Princes and People reckoned with, Chs. v.–vii.

V. 1. Hear this, ye priests; and take note, O house of Israel; and ye of the king's house, give heed; for to you judgment belongs! For ye have been a snare at Mizpah, and

Chapter V.

Ver. 1. Beginning of new discourse, like ch. iv. 1. The address is to the heads of the nation who are most responsible, especially the rulers of the royal house, to whom the judicial power belongs. The latter is the meaning of כִּי לָכֶם הׄ, not "the judgment concerns you" (LXX and many expositors). See on the contrary, Micah iii. 1; cf. Ezek. xxi. 32; Deut. i. 17; Jer. xxxii. 7.—But what a mischievous use they have made of their power! Instead of maintaining right, they have craftily brought the nation to ruin. The second כִּי states the ground of the Lord's complaint about them.—פַּח, see Amos iii. 5; רשׁת also refers to bird-catching. Alongside *Tabor*, the commanding mountain in the western country, *Mizpah* (a high place even in name) is perhaps the one situated in the country east of the Jordan (Gilead), Judg. x. 17. The two heights, however, are scarcely mentioned as simply representing the entire country; but in allusion to recent occurrences no longer known to us, perhaps national assemblies which gave

a net spread out on Tabor. 2. And revolters are sunk deep in corrupt ways; but I am a rebuke to them all! 3. I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me: for now thou hast played the harlot, Ephraim, thou hast defiled thyself, Israel. 4. They will not give up their manner of life to return to their God: for a spirit of whoredom is within them, and Yahveh they have not known. 5. And the pride of Israel testifies to his face, and Israel and Ephraim shall stumble by their transgression; Judah also falls with them. 6. They shall go with their sheep and with their oxen to seek Yahveh, but shall not find him; he has departed from them. 7. They

rise to the judgment of ver. 3*b*. Ver. 2. To be explained according to ch. ix. 9, Isa. xxvi. 6, so that שחט is only another mode of writing for שחת; this, however, is not "pit," but infin. Pi. "to act wickedly." שטים (cf. סָטִים, Ps. ci. 3), apostates. I am a punishment *to them all*, tempters as well as tempted. Their punishment is as sure as God's existence. Ver. 3. For He sees through the nets so finely woven (cf. vii. 2). —עתה in ver. 1 and ch. ii. 12. Ver. 4. Either "they give not up their deeds," or "their deeds do not allow them to turn:" the last accounts are so doubtful that conversion is no longer to be thought of. The former is preferable, because otherwise we should expect יתנום (Judg. xv. 1); כִּי also would not easily fit in. The persistence in their ungodly course has its ground in the spirit (ch. iv. 12) which makes repentance impossible. *Yahveh they know not*, see ch. iv. 1. Ver. 5. ענה בפנים, to act hostilely against any one; to bear witness against him, as in Job xvi. 8.—גאון י׳, as in vii. 10, the *pride of Israel*, according to Amos vi. 8; Nah. ii. 3; *i.e.* its wealth, grand buildings, military power, idols, etc. Injustice and sin cleave to all this, so that it comes forward as a hostile witness. According to others, the "pride of Israel" would be Yahveh Himself, and they appeal to Amos viii. 7 in support. But such an idiom cannot be certainly confirmed. For the first time *Judah* also is warned of the same fate as Ephraim: cf. ver. 10. Ver. 6. When they see the futility of other deities, they will seek to change Yahveh's mind too late and by too outward means. חלץ, He has got quit of them, broken off, vanished from them. Delitzsch: "The frequent use of the simple active (Kal) instead of Niphal, in a middle sense is characteristic of Hosea's style: cf. also the Piel (ch. iv. 14) יפרדו for Niphal." Ver. 7. בָּגַד בְּ, as in Jer. iii. 20, of wedded unfaithfulness

have committed treachery against Yahveh; for they have begotten foreign children: now a new moon shall swallow them up along with their portions.

8. Blow ye the horn in Gibeah, the trumpet in Ramah! Sound an alarm at Beth-Aven! Behind thee, Benjamin! 9. Ephraim shall become a desolation on the day of chastisement: respecting Israel's tribes I have made known what is certain. 10. Judah's princes have become like landmark-shifters: upon them will I pour out my fury like a flood!

having for its consequence that the indignant husband sets himself completely free. They have begotten strange children, whom Yahveh acknowledges not, namely, in the spirit of whoredom, in idolatrous lusting, so that "heathenism is the dower of the new generation from the day of its birth" (Del.). The passage is a commentary on ילדי זנונים, ch. i. 2. A *new moon* suffices to sweep them away; one month to the next brings them and their old inheritance to an end. Ver. 8. The prophet even beholds the catastrophe as already present, and calls for alarm-signals, such as were sounded on high watch-towers at the invasion of foes; cf. ch. viii. 1.—*Gibeah* in Benjamin, Isa. x. 29; *Ramah* also in the neighbourhood of Gibeah, Josh. xviii. 25, to-day Er-Ram.—*Beth-Aven* is mentioned, indeed, in Josh. vii. 2, xviii. 12, as a locality on the northern limit of Benjamin; but a better explanation according to Hosea's usage (ch. iv. 15), is Bethel.—The fourth cry אחריך ב׳, *Behind thee, Benjamin!* = the danger is at thy heels! The phrase had perhaps become proverbial from Judg. v. 14, where it is certainly used in another sense. When the alarm-signals issue from *these* places, the foe expected from the north has long ago burst into Ephraim and is already threatening Benjamin-Judah, which also has reason to fear the avenger. Why, ver. 10 says. Ver. 10. Cf. with ch. iv. 4. The secret or violent *removal* of the *boundaries* (from סוּג, Ges. § 72, Anm. 9) fixed by God is threatened in the law with God's curse, Deut. xix. 14, xxvii. 17, which the prophet applies also to politics. The *princes of Judah*, who, if any one, were called to maintain legality, have gone over to the side of unprincipled annexationists! According to ver. 11*b*, the allusion is to a deed of violence against Ephraim, which was weakened after the death of Jeroboam II. by internal disorder (Hitzig suggests the seizure of Jericho). It is instructive to note that Hosea, much as he desires the reunion of the kingdoms under David's

11. Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in his right, because it pleased him to walk according to orders. 12. But I am like a moth to Ephraim, and like worm-eating to the house of Judah. 13. And Ephraim saw his hurt, and Judah his wound; then went Ephraim to Asshur, and sent to king "Combatant;" but he is not able to heal you, nor shall the wound depart from you. 14. For I am like a lion to Ephraim, and like a young lion to the house of Judah: I, I will tear and go away, will carry off and none shall deliver. 15. I will

sceptre, severely condemns any attack on the northern kingdom in its weakness. The evil-doers will be overwhelmed with God's wrath. Ver. 11. *Broken in right* (cf. Amos iv. 1) is Ephraim, because it chose to walk according to human direction.—צו, *statutum*, order, but different from חק, with the suggestion of what is arbitrary, crafty. Because it preferred to submit to the wilful ordering of human authorities (thus, after rejecting true authority all the more devoted to the false), it lost its right. George Dandin, "*tu l'as voulu!*" Ver. 12. Not a petty, but a fearful image of an invisible, uncanny, and irresistible power is the incessantly gnawing moth or worm. Ephraim and Judah carry their real foe about with them, he does not come from without: it is the slowly but surely annihilating God. Ver. 13. All efforts to help and heal are therefore in vain. They saw, indeed, their bad condition, but did not discern the author; they therefore do not seek help in the right place. —מזור (from זור, *comprimere*), properly compress, bandage, then the *wound* itself.—King *Combatant* (ch. x. 6) plainly refers to the *Assyrian* monarch, although the designation has not been shown to be Assyrian. What king is meant? Schrader suggests (*Inscrip.* vol. ii. 136) Asurdan, B.C. 755, 754; most moderns Pul, whom Menahem wished to win (2 Kings xv. 19), and to whom also Azariah (Uzziah) of Judah paid tribute (according to Schrader on 2 Kings xv. 1), as he is identical with Tiglathpileser II. So Nowack; cf. also Sayce, *Ancient Monuments*, p. 127 f. In this case the act of homage falls, according to Assyrian chronology, only into the year 738. See, however, Klostermann on 2 Kings xv. 19, and also p. 496. The great king cannot heal where a mightier one makes sick. Ver. 15. *To my place:* the heavenly, inaccessible place is meant, whither God retires after revealing Himself, so that He is no longer approachable; cf. Isa. xviii. 4.—שחר, Piel, select phrase for בַּקֵּשׁ (Rashi); cf. Ges. § 60, Anm. 3.

depart, will return to my place until they suffer and seek my face: in their distress they will seek after me.

VI. 1. "Come, let us return to Yahveh! For he has torn, and he will also heal us; he has smitten, and he will also bind us up. 2. Within two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before his face. 3. And let us know, let us follow on to know Yahveh: his going forth is sure as daybreak; and he will come to us like the rain, like the latter rain which sprinkles the land."

Chapter VI.

Ver. 1 ff. joins closely on to what precedes, as shown by the references to the wounding and rending in ch. v. 13 f., and the reference in the penitent return to ch. v. 15. Yet the LXX are without warrant in inserting a λέγοντες before the summons לכו. Vv. 1–3 are more than an address put into the lips of the Israelites of the future (so the majority of expositors). They contain an exhortation of Hosea, seriously meant, to his countrymen to turn at once, as in this case they would be sure of mercy; whereas, of course, if they remain obstinate (as ch. xi. 5 complains), this gift of mercy and new life will be reserved for a later generation; cf. Isa. ii. 5.—So certainly is it He, who has torn, that will heal us.—יך without copula, in order not to dim the clearness of the sentence. Ver. 2. As we are as good as dead (cf. ch. xiii. 1), He will perform on us the miracle of resurrection, and that in the briefest time.—In מימים is מן partitive: out of the period of two days, therefore *within;* cf. Ezek. xxxviii. 8. Parallel therewith stands the *third day*, essentially the same period; but the quickening of course precedes the raising up.—*Before him*, no longer behind His back, but like children before their father as the object of his goodwill. Ver. 3. To ונדעה the two following words are at once an explanation and climax. The knowledge of God lies not in the power of man; he can only pursue it (cf. διώκειν, Rom. ix. 30 f., and elsewhere). But this assumed, His gracious revelation, properly His *rising* (cf. יצא of the sun), is as sure as the occurrence of any ordinary phenomenon. The exhortations have therefore also the worth of a hypothetical clause. Useful phenomena, which are hailed with joy, such as the break of day and the coming of the latter rain, are chosen by way of comparison.—נכון, part. Niphal, from כּוּן, firm, unmoved; cf. Ps. lxxxix. 38.—The Lord prospers the upright; when man draws

4. What shall I do to thee, Ephraim? What shall I do to thee, Judah, as your love is like a morning cloud, and like the dew which is early up and away? 5. Therefore have I hewn by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth: and my law shall go forth like the light. 6. For I delight in love, and not in sacrifice; and in knowledge of God more than in burnt-offerings. 7. But they have transgressed the covenant like Adam; there they dealt

nigh to Him longing for salvation, He draws nigh to man eager to save. Whoever sincerely strives to know Him is certain of an answer. Ver. 4. What can God do to bring them to better ways when, despite every attestation of His truth, their *love* (here a thoroughly right disposition toward God and man) is just as inconstant as, according to ver. 3, God's faithfulness is constant? Their better moods are gone in a moment. Ver. 5. God has already sufficiently shown His determination to punish in making His word committed to the prophets a destroying sword. The menacing prophets are Amos and Hosea; the first especially is pointed at; cf. ch. xi. 2, 7, xii. 11. On the *slaying*, cf. ver. 2. Others, after the LXX, make the prophets the object of the hewing down; but the prophets of Baal and Astarte, whom Elijah and Jehu slew, rather fell by the sword than by the prophets' word.—Ver. 5*b* read, after LXX, כְּאוֹר יֵצֵא ומִשְׁפָּטִי (not יָצָא, Hitzig). Clear and unhalting, like the light of dawn, shall God's righteousness hold on its way; cf. Ps. xxxvii. 6. Ver. 6 states the rule according to which God acts. He requires a loving disposition, not outward sacrificings. The stress always laid by Hosea (as in ver. 4) on *love* (ἔλεος, LXX, somewhat too narrow, as the feeling toward God is also included), as the inward quality that answers to God's holy will, is characteristic of his teaching and quite in the N. T. spirit (cf. Matt. ix. 13, xii. 7). Not mere philanthropy is meant, as the following דעת א׳ shows, but the love which is the fruit of fellowship with God.—מִן, comparative, shows, like 1 Sam. xv. 22, how וְלֹא, which is absolute in form, is to be understood. See Jer. vii. 22 f. Ver. 7. By gross transgression of the primary law of love they have become covenant-breakers like *Adam* (cf. Job xxxi. 33), who by his disobedience trifled away his fellowship with God. Gen. ii. 16 f. may be described as ברית. Others: "like men" (?) they have, etc., in which case one would at least expect כבני אדם (Ps. lxxxii. 7 belongs to another class because of the contrast there). Nowack: "like

treacherously with me. 8. Gilead is a stronghold of transgressors, spotted with blood. 9. And like as a brigand lies in wait, a troop of priests murders in the way to Shechem: for they have done horribly. 10. In the house of Israel I have seen startling things; there Ephraim gave himself up to whoredom, Israel was polluted. 11. Judah also—a harvest is appointed thee, when I bring again the captivity of my people.

men who transgress a covenant;" but even then the phrase would be strange.—שָׁם points convincingly to a demonstration of their godlessness, as in ver. 8 f. allusion is made to several such. Ver. 8. *Gilead*, not a town of this name, although Euseb. *Onomast.* knows of such an one, but, as elsewhere, a district like a nest of robbers, bearing everywhere traces of blood. Indeed the country east of the Jordan seems to have been specially implicated in the disorders which accompanied the fall of the house of Jehu. The regicide Shallum was perhaps a Gileadite, judging by the name of his father Jabesh (2 Kings xv. 10). The factious divisions led to civil war and wasting brigandage.—עָקֻב, here *spotted*, smeared (denominative of עָקֵב) with blood. Ver. 9. חִכֵּי, infin. = חַכּוֹת, for חַכּוֹת, here in hostile sense.—אִישׁ גְּדוּדִים, conspirator (*Ströter, combatant*, Luther). Delitzsch takes אִישׁ as object.: "as bands fall on men."—*Shechem* was a Levite (Josh. xxi. 21) and also an asylum (Josh. xx. 7) town, in which no one could be slain in vengeance. But, in a reckless way, the priests caused the fugitives fleeing thither to be taken and slain in ambush. Vv. 8 and 9 are allusions to recent occurrences no longer known to us.—זִמָּה, in the language of the Torah, the worst form of outrage, refined wantonness or cruelty, etc. (from זָמַם, to contrive). Ver. 11. שָׁת, impersonally: one has appointed for thee, is best explained by Hosea's custom of using transitive forms intransitively; see on ch. v. 6, therefore: it is appointed thee, lies before thee. The *harvest* is to be understood, not of judgment, but of deliverance, as ver. 11*b* shows. Here, therefore, Hosea has passed over to the language of promise so imperceptibly, that he does not even mention the judgment upon Judah which we look for after גַּם, and which he has in mind. The meaning is: Judah also is in no better position, therefore it also is doomed to captivity; but a gracious regathering lies before it. שׁוּב שְׁבוּת, with transitive Kal, since Joel iv. 1, Amos ix. 14, a common phrase for deliverance.

VII. 1. As I would heal Israel, the transgression of Ephraim is discovered, and the iniquities of Samaria. For they have practised deceit; and the thief breaks in, the band of robbers raids without. 2. And they never say in their heart, I remember all their evil doing. Now have their misdeeds encompassed them; they are before my face. 3. By their evil doing they gladden the king, and by their tricks the princes. 4. They are all adulterers together, like an oven heated by the baker—he ceases stirring up, from the kneading of the dough till it is leavened. 5. On the day of our king

Chapter VII.

Ver. 1 joins on to the foregoing. The more God heals and improves, the more incorrigible and reckless this disorganised people appear, deceit, robbery, and murder being the order of the day; cf. ch. vi. 8 f.—פּשׁט, properly, to spread over the land. Ver. 2. They consider not, that . . . (as usually in Hebrew, *oratio directa* for *obliqua*).—עתה, see on ch. ii. 12. Their shameful deeds gird them round as threatening witnesses. Ver. 3. Instead of wickedness standing in fear of the arm of authority, it is the best means for winning favour with the king and his ministers. These rejoice in open violence and secret intrigue (כחשׁים). Ver. 4. *They all*, princes and people, are *adulterers*, *i.e.* here filled with forbidden flames, as the comparison with an oven shows. More precisely: they resemble an oven, which indeed is already heated, but whose flame is still kept down until the baker has finished kneading and leavening the dough. That is, evil passion (here revolutionary lust of power) is already kindled, although they still outwardly preserve a calm bearing, until the opportunity occurs to commit the most terrible deeds. Cf. with this the stages of sin in Jas. i. 14 f. (Del.).—תנור, elsewhere masc., is here fem., as בערה shows; the Massoretic text, by pushing back the tone, has wrongly changed it into masc., with paragog. ה־ָ.—אפה, with ן of the author.—מעיר, partic. of הֵעִיר, to kindle a fire. Ver. 5. Such a day, when evil passions burst forth in wild flames, is the *day of our king*, whether his birthday or coronation day, when all is revelry; the princes drink themselves sick, and in judicial blindness he makes common cause with those who deride him.—החלו, they become sick, is essentially transitive, make themselves sick. Hitzig, *et al.*, differently, after the old

the princes make themselves sick with the heat of wine: he shakes hands with mockers. 6. For they have laid their cunning to their heart as to an oven; the whole night their baker sleeps, in the morning he makes it burn brightly. 7. They all glow together like an oven, and consume their judges: all their kings fall, none among them crying to me. 8. Ephraim, he is kneaded among the nations; he is a cake that has not been turned. 9. Foreigners have consumed his strength, but he has not come to discretion; already grey hair is sprinkled upon him, yet he has not come to discretion. 10. And the pride of Israel accuses him to his face; but they

versions: הֵחֵלּוּ, they began to be heated.—The causal מִן in מיין is thrust between the stat. constr. and its genitive.—משך י׳, properly, to draw the hand; here, to draw familiarly to oneself. *Mockers,* who look on him as a fool, and would rob him of his dignity. Ver. 6. The figure of the oven is taken up again, for on this feast-day it becomes a horrid reality. The festive night exactly corresponds to that of the baker, who does not make the flames break forth till morning. That which is to be baked is their deep-laid scheme to murder the king, with whom they yet jest and play all the night.—In vv. 4, 7 they themselves are likened to the oven; in ver. 6 their heart is so likened. In this case קֵרֵב, with accus. of the oven, must be the usual phrase for applying the fuel (with בְּ).—*Their baker,* who gives the signal for the riskful deed. בער, to kindle, as in Isa. xxx. 33. Ver. 7. The figure used for the third time is here worked out as to its ruinous effect. Where such a rebellious spirit burns in men's hearts, no government can keep together.—Several *kings* have already fallen by rebellion and assassination, Zechariah, Shallum. This brings to the beginning of Menahem's reign.—בהם refers to the princes. Ver. 8. Two further images from baking to depict the nation's fate: Ephraim is *kneaded among the nations, i.e.* its independent existence is lost in the dispersion; it is, secondly, a burnt cake. עֻגָה is a round cake, baked on hot stones or ashes, which ought to be turned so as not to be burnt on one side. For Israel it is already too late. It is too deeply implicated in heathen customs to be able to shake them off. Ver. 9. Foolishly it has let itself be infected and consumed by foreign ways (cf. the tribute, ch. v. 13), although it was old enough to understand.—זרקה, transitive form, see on ch. v. 6. Ver. 10, see on ch. v. 5. Judgment would befall Israel by means of that of which it was proud, so that this

have not turned to Yahveh their God, or sought him for all this. 11. And Ephraim was like a silly dove which is without understanding: they cried to Egypt, they went to Asshur. 12. As they go, I will spread my net over them, will bring them down like birds of the heaven; I will chastise them, as their congregation has heard. 13. Woe to them, for they have flown away from me! Destruction to them, for they have become sinners against me! And I would fain deliver them, but they have spoken lies against me. 14. And they cried not to me in their heart, but howled on their beds; they banded themselves together for wheat and new wine; they rebelled against me. 15. But I trained and strengthened

pomp would accuse it; yet in these humbling circumstances (בכל זאת) it turned not to its God. Ver. 11. As a *simple dove*, listening to every call, flies uncertainly hither and thither, so they wavered in their acts of submission between Egypt and Assyria, according as the one or the other party had the upper hand at court; cf. ch. xii. 2. Ver. 12. איסרם, irregular Hiphil of יסר (Ges. § 70, 2), unless, with Delitzsch, from אסר, with which יסר interchanged: "I will put them in fetters."—*In accordance with what was heard in their congregation, i.e.* the preaching heard by it. Amos ix. 2 is especially in the prophet's thoughts. Ver. 13. נדדו, to be rendered according to the usual meaning: they have *flown away* from me, the figure of birds still continuing. *I was ready to deliver them* (not an interrogative sentence); but they speak lies about me, as if I could not or would not do it, as if I were a powerless God, or one doing them hurt. Ver. 14. Their *crying* was not *to me*, and came not from penitent *hearts*, but was mere *howling* (for יְיִלִילוּ, Ges. § 70, Anm. 2) on their *beds*, where, in hours of calm reflection, they weakly bemoaned their condition. Their *gatherings together*, which suggest sacred pilgrimages after the manner of Joel i. 13 ff., ii. 16 ff. (but cf. ii. 13!), are of the same kind. גור, Hithpol., *to gather together*, after the meaning of the Kal, Isa. liv. 15, etc. Their selfish assembling, which is not for God but for private enjoyment, is a gathering offensive to God.—סור, here construed with בְּ, after the analogy of פישׁע, בגד, etc. Ver. 15. יסר, Piel, He has taught them to use their powers as a father his sons! Hosea is never weary of emphasising their ingratitude.

their arms, yet they meditated evil against me. 16. They turn; but not upward; they are like a deceitful bow: their princes shall fall by the sword for the raging of their tongue, —this is their derision in the land of Egypt.

Exposition.

Contents of chs. v.–vii. Princes and People reckoned with. 1. First Stage: why judgment comes on Israel and Judah, ch. v.; 2. Second Stage: what is the way to salvation, which, however, is despised until after the judgment, ch. vi.; 3. Third Stage: how rebellious Israel fares, ch. vii.

Various circumstances intimate that this discourse, or series of prophecies, belongs to the beginning of the reign of Menahem. The revolutions, which prevented any durable government after the death of Jeroboam II., are, in part, already over (vii. 7). In comparison with ch. iv., the situation is materially advanced. If Hos. i. 7 had spoken only comfort to Judah, and, still later, ch. iv. 15 had hoped it would be warned, although appearances were not promising, this hope has now proved vain; it must suffer the same fate as Ephraim, according to ch. v. 5, vi. 11, after it has been guilty of grave offences, ch. v. 10. There is no uniform progress of thought from stage to stage. The same charges and threats run through the whole. First, a bright prospect opens (ch. vi.), giving an insight into the happy issues of God's dealings, especially for Judah, after the judgment. Many see the beginning of a new discourse in ch. vi. 4. But

Ver. 16. They *turn round* indeed; but that it is in no saving conversion (*μετάνοια*), but a fruitless reaction, is affirmed in the clause לֹא עָל (pausal for עַל, as in xi. 7), not upward, where their God is. Rather, their turning is like that of a malignant, treacherous *bow*, which hurls the arrow back at him who holds it.—Their poisonous, embittered speech against God brings them destruction, at which their false friends in *Egypt* will laugh in derision.

these words are better taken as the Lord's reply, which the nation receives from Him, because it draws near to Him, not sincerely, as in vv. 1–3, but with impenitent, vacillating heart. In the entire rebuke, the political point of view predominates; it is addressed mainly to the princes. The leaders of the nation in Israel and Judah are reproached because they insult God by courting foreign favour and assistance, seeking it now in Egypt and now in Assyria, as in somewhat later times Isaiah specially rebukes the same sin (Hos. v. 13, vii. 9, 11 ff.). The princes of Judah, besides serious violations of right, have sinned against Ephraim (ch. v. 10). Moreover, sanguinary excesses, countenanced by the authorities, take place throughout the land, especially in Gilead and Ephraim (Shechem), ch. v. 1 f., vii. i. 3; finally, a rebellious spirit, fatal to all order and authority, makes Ephraim a volcano,—in the prophet's figure, an oven (ch. vii.)

Thus the nation is already in the power of death, and will be deprived, by exile, of its independent existence. Its deliverance will resemble a resurrection, which will take place directly that the nation shall turn from its sins and mere outward rites to God, and manifest the spirit of love which He approves, but is not to be looked for until the headstrong nation has been brought to reflection by severe judgments. It is true, ch. vi. 2 does not refer to the physical resurrection of individuals, but to the revival of the nation that has fallen into a state of inward and outward death,—a thought which is elaborated in Ezek. ch. xxxvii. But the fact that Hosea believes in the power of God to raise His Church in three days from this state, is a proof that he credits divine omnipotence with victory over death absolutely; and, in so far, his testimony is not immaterial in reference to the literal resurrection of the dead.

Alarm Again! Ch. viii.

VIII. 1. The trumpet to thy mouth! Like an eagle (it rushes) on Yahveh's house! Because they have transgressed my covenant, and offended against my law. 2. They cry to me, "My God, we know thee, Israel!" 3. Israel detested that which is good: the foe shall hunt it. 4. They chose kings, but it came not from me; they made princes, but I knew nothing of it. Their silver and their gold they made into carved pillars for themselves, that it may be rooted out. 5. Abominable is thy calf, O Samaria, my anger is kindled against them; how long yet will they be unable to keep

Chapter VIII.

Ver. 1. Cf. ch. v. 8. The prophet is to sound an alarm, because, like an eagle darting on its prey, it (the destroying power, cf. ver. 3) descends upon *Yahveh's house*, by which is not to be understood the temple in Jerusalem (Jerome, Theodoret, Cyril), or that in Samaria, like Bethel (Ewald, cf. ch. ix. 4; Amos ix. 1); but the dwelling of Yahveh is the nation set up in Canaan (cf. ch. ix. 8, 15; Num. xii. 7; Jer. xii. 7; Zech. ix. 8), not, indeed, the bare land in itself, but the divine abode established therein.—Transgression of *the law* is charged against them, as in ch. iv. 6. See on ch. viii. 12. Ver. 2. They fancy that, as God's peculiar people, they have a right to His help. But it fares with them as with those described in Matt. vii. 22 f., because in their case there is no question of real "knowledge" in Hosea's deep sense. Ver. 3. The two chief complaints: Their kings, chosen against the Lord's will, and their manufactured idols. The verbs intimate something unworthy, arbitrary; they elect kings and princes at random, *not from me*, not at my bidding, without my knowledge and approval. לִמְעַן י׳, the subject is Israel. The particle of purpose indicates the inevitable effect. They acted as if they intended their own destruction. Ver. 5. זנח, here intransitively (see on ch. v. 6): to be abhorrent, abhorred of God; they are as offensive to Him with their idols as His law is to them, according to ver. 3.—*Thy calf*, perhaps a derisive designation of the images of oxen set up by Jeroboam I. on a reduced scale at Bethel and Dan (respecting their origin see E. König, *Hauptprobleme*, p. 53 ff.), which fall to the account

themselves pure? 6. For it springs from Israel, a smith has prepared it; and it is no God, for the calf of Samaria shall be shattered. 7. For they sow wind, and they shall reap tempest: it comes to no growth; stalk bears no fruit: perchance it bears, foreigners shall swallow it up. 8. Israel is swallowed up: now are they among the heathen like a despised vessel. 9. For they are gone up to Asshur, a wild ass that goes stubbornly by itself: Ephraim has bought lovers. 10. Even if they hire among the heathen, I will

of Samaria, although there was none in that city; cf. ch. x. 5. —*How long will purity* (innocence) *be impossible to them*, i.e. will they be without the moral strength to clear themselves of the guilt of idolatry? Even the best princes of the northern kingdom, like Jehu, did not extirpate image-worship, but walked in the sins of Jeroboam, 2 Kings x. 29. Ver. 6. והוא, taken by the Massoretes as subj. to מיִשׂראל (cf. Eccles. v. 6), which is a better course than to join it to what follows, and to suppose an ellipsis. Ver. 7. The figurative saying of sowing and harvest (they sow by vain, useless action, and reap futility and ruin) pictures the actual harvest, which fails, even if it begins to grow and, even if it becomes ripe, falls a prey to enemies. Ver. 8. Israel has let the heathen steal its most precious possession; now it is thrown by them to the refuse, like a despised vessel. Ver. 9. Cf. ch. v. 13, vii. 11. המה, Delitzsch reckons among the peculiarities of Hosea's style the use of the separate pronoun without special emphasis. That Hosea uses this form very often is certain; yet this is scarcely done in cases like the present, and vv. 4, 13, ix. 10, xiii. 2, without emphasis.—A *wild ass* (described in Job. xxxix. 5 ff.), going *stubbornly*, wilfully, *by itself* its own ways. This stubborn animal cannot be tamed, follows no rational counsel or dissuasion.—תנה, Hiphil and Kal, *to hire* (cf. אתנה, ch. ii. 14). Their headstrong way consists in acquiring friendships which cost much and bring them at last to ruin. Ver. 10. In no case is the reading of some moderns to be accepted, ויחילו; "and they shall soon (כְּמְעָט!) *tremble* at the tribute to the King of princes." If we retain the usual reading, חלל, Hiphil, is to be understood in the sense *release, relieve;* the nations collected by God against Israel release them a little from tribute,—an ironical intimation of the end of their state, with which the payment of tribute also ceases. But perhaps we should read ויחדלו (cf. LXX), they will cease a while from it, for the same

now gather them together, and they shall give a little relief from the tribute of the king of princes. 11. For Ephraim made many altars to itself for atonement*; they became to him altars to sin. 12. Though I wrote for him a vast number of my laws, they were esteemed like those of a foreigner. 13. As my "roast-sacrifices" they slew flesh and ate! Yahveh takes no pleasure in them; now he will remember their transgression and punish their sins: they

reason. Ver. 11. The tautology, incomprehensible in Hosea, vanishes if we read the first לחטא in the Piel form, לְחַטֹּא. The infin. abs., perhaps, is perhaps used for the sake of the rhythm. Ver. 12. Kethib רִבּוֹ, myriad; Keri רַבֵּי, plur. of רַב, masses. "Masses of my revealed will" refers not to many copies, but to utterances of the divine will, commands. It is not necessary to read תּוֹרָתִי (Hitz.).—Although אכתוב is half hypothetical, in keeping with the hyperbole רבו, it assumes, at any rate, the existence of many laws in writing. Hosea therefore is acquainted with a comprehensive *legal code*, consisting of numerous divine commands (for תורה cannot here refer to prophetic oracles), whose existence in *written* form was traced back to divine inspiration (Moses). As to the contents of this law, it is mere prejudice to assert that it contained only ethical, no ceremonial, precepts. This contradicts the analogy of other Semitic religions, where the ceremonial appears from the first in close connection with the ethical; it contradicts altogether the fundamental importance belonging to the symbolism of ceremony in ancient religions, the occurrence of ceremonial ordinances in the Decalogue and covenant-book, as well as the presupposition of an extensive priestly law in Deuteronomy; and, not least, it contradicts, finally, the context in Hosea. Already, in ch. iv. 13, the arbitrary choice of *places* of worship was plainly enough disapproved, and so just previously (ch. viii. 11) the *crowd* of altars erected. See also ch. x. 1 f. We quite expect, in ver. 12, to be reminded that such choice, etc., is against God's express law, not merely not required in it. In ver. 13, also, the want of religious feeling is scarcely the *only* ground of the fault found with the sacrifices; the ceremonial consecration required in the law is also wanting. The legal code known to Hosea is thus not essentially different in contents from that found in our Pentateuch, although it differed from the latter in extent and arrangement. Ver. 13. Under the name יי הבהבי they slew *flesh*. . . . The word is not to be

shall return to Egypt. 14. And Israel has forgotten his Creator, and built palaces; and Judah (has built) a multitude of fenced cities. So will I send fire into his cities, that it may devour her strongholds.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. viii.: Another Alarm because of the grievous offences of the land!

This new rebuke, in which the grievous offences of the disobedient people of Samaria are again recounted, assumes (tribute to Assyria to procure its favour, vv. 9, 10) essentially the same political situation as the former discourse (v. 13, vii. 11), and was therefore uttered somewhat later. The independent setting up of thrones and governments, the artificial images, the self-willed dallying with the great powers, the insolent setting up of sacrificial rites with illegal Yahveh-worship, are just so many denials of their God and Maker, calling down upon them His judgment, which will be executed on the objects of their sinful love and through them. If the discourse applies primarily to Samaria, which was especially boastful of its royal house

derived from יהב (sacrifices of my gifts?), but, according to Delitzsch (cf. Levy, *Chald. Wörterb.* p. 191), to be connected with the Aramaic הבהב (to burn, roast), as a North Palestinian phrase for burnt-sacrifices. Their sacrificing amounts to profane flesh-eating, partly because the right disposition is wanting (as in Jer. vii. 21), partly because their disobedience moves loftily above all formal commands of the Mosaic law, so that their "roast-sacrifices," which are neither burnt-offerings nor sin-offerings, have a distinctly heathen flavour.—עתה on ch. ii. 12.—As they have shown themselves unworthy of the law of Sinai, they must go back to Egypt. Ver. 14. Unmindful of their Creator and Preserver, they make palaces their pride, and fortresses their trust. The last reproach against Judah suits the days of Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 9 f.), and was soon urged also by Isaiah and Micah. Ver. 14*b* according to Amos ii. 5.

and its worship, still it is quietly intimated (ver. 14) that Judah also is far from seeking its salvation in the right place.

The State of Punishment, Ch. ix. 1–9.

IX. 1. Rejoice not, O Israel, with singing like the nations! For thou hast gone a whoring from thy God, hast loved harlot's hire on every wheat-floor. 2. Threshing-floor and winepress shall not refresh them, and the new wine shall play her false. 3. They shall not remain in the land of Yahveh; but Ephraim shall return to Egypt, and in Asshur they shall eat that which is unclean. 4. They shall not pour out wine to Yahveh, and their sacrifices shall not please him: they are to them like mourning food; all they, who eat thereof, shall render themselves unclean: for their food serves (only) their appetite; it comes not into Yahveh's

Chapter IX.

Ver. 1. אֶל as in Job iii. 22. The conscience of Israel should be worse than that of all other nations, as it has fallen away from its God; hence festive song should never be heard in its land.—On every threshing-floor sheaves were set up in honour of the nature-deities; these gifts of nature thus became a harlot's reward, which a false god was supposed to have given them, according to ch. ii. 7, 14. Ver. 2. In substance like ch. ii. 11.—בָּהֶם, caused by the suggestion in ver. 1 that Israel is a זוֹנָה. Ver. 3. *Egypt* (ch. viii. 13, ix. 6) and *Assyria*, the old and the new land of bondage are put together (ch. xi. 5); the two share the exiles between them, as the people dallied with both. In fact, in the Assyrian, as later after the Babylonian, deportation a multitude of Israelites fled to Egypt.—*Unclean* (cf. Ezek. iv. 13 f.), as in a foreign land the observance of the laws of food will be very difficult, and really, for the reason given in ver. 4, all food will be unclean. Ver. 4. The last illusion will vanish, that they brought offerings pleasing to God, as they cannot bring such outside the holy land. The food will have the effect of polluting them like mourning-feasts (Jer. xvi. 7), according to Deut. xxvi. 14; the reason: their food is only for themselves, serves merely to satisfy their desires, comes not into the temple. How closely the heart of the Israelite, even of the prophet, is

house. 5. What will ye do on the day of the feast, and on the festal day of Yahveh? 6. For, behold, they go away from the desolation: Egypt shall gather them, Memphis bury them. Their precious silver vaults, nettles shall possess them: thorn bushes are in their tents. 7. The days of reckoning are come, the days of recompense come; Israel shall experience it! The prophet is become a fool, the man of the spirit a madman for the multitude of thy transgression, and because the enmity is so great. 8. Ephraim is a spy toward my God: the prophet—a snare of fowlers is in all his paths, enmity in the house of his God! 9. They are sunk

seen here to be bound up with the sacrificial cult! Bread, ministering only to human desire, when the first-fruits, etc., have not been consecrated to the Lord, makes unclean! Ver. 6. הלכו משד points rather to migration, in consequence of the devastation of the land, than to deportation. Assyria is the destroyer.—כּוֹף here only, elsewhere נָף; see Jer. ii. 16. —מחמד, elsewhere precious things, jewels; here perhaps a costly shrine or state-room for keeping the silver. Read קִפּוּדֵיהֶם, according to Baer, *ad loc.* Ver. 7. The judgment being so near, the prophet, who alone sees it, seems a *fool*, and bears himself like a *madman*. Both epithets were applied to the prophet in an unfriendly sense. Cf. the latter, which was easily applied by the popular voice to those seized by God's Spirit, especially to a seer of such deep emotion as Hosea, 2 Kings ix. 11. Both are wrongly referred by others to false prophets. The excitement of the true prophet is heightened by the *opposition* (שטם = שטן) which he has constantly and everywhere to endure, as ver. 8 explains. Ver. 8. עִם (Deut. ix. 7), in intercourse with the Lord or His prophet. Delitzsch: "The God, who speaks by the prophet, has in Ephraim a malignant spy instead of a humble observer." Cf. the scribes in the N. T.—The prophet is outlawed, and attacked in *the house of his God;* this is best understood in harmony with ch. viii. 1, ix. 15. If we interpret it by ch. ix. 4, the attacks on Jeremiah in the temple (chs. xix., xxvi.) must be compared. Ver. 9. Cf. ch. v. 2. See the shameful deed of *Gibeah* in Judg. xix. That narrative, which is contested by the newest criticism, is supported by this passage and ch. x. 9. In opposition to Wellhausen, see Bredenkamp, *Gesetz u. Propheten*, p. 154 ff. That crime was the first foul stain with which the land was defiled; hence it was full of

in corruption as in the days of Gibeah; he will remember their guilt, will punish their sins.

Exposition.

Contents of ix. 1–9 : The State of Punishment.

In thorough keeping, as to thought, with the previous oracle, the state of future exile is here pictured. Away with joy from the land, cries the prophet to his countrymen, probably at a joyous religious festival, for such pretexts of doing service to God by enjoying one's self will soon no longer exist. How will they be able to do it in the lands of exile, Egypt and Assyria being mentioned as such, where there will be no opportunity for sacrifices? Cf. iii. 4. Judgment is already at the door; on this account the prophet, who loves his people and fails to bring them to repentance, is beside himself; his only reward is scoffing and dangerous plotting.

First Series of angry Retrospects, ix. 10–xi. 11.

IX. 10. Like grapes in the wilderness I found Israel; like an early fruit on the fig-tree in its first season I saw your fathers: but they came to Baal-peor, and consecrated themselves to the god of shame, and became abominable

peril also; it almost cost the existence of a whole tribe before it was expiated. God will judge analogously now. Ver. 10. There follows a series of *historical retrospects* suggested by ver. 9. *Grapes* in the wilderness are not an image of isolation and desertion (Hitz.), but of something seized with eagerness. To the loving eye of the Lord, Israel appeared in the midst of the nations as such a fruit, which is most welcome. At the same time the figure alludes to the desert march, the second (the early fig) to Israel's hopeful youth. Cf., besides, Isa. xxviii. 4; and on the matter, Jer. ii. 2. But how have they repaid the grace which exalted them? This is told in Num. xxv. (cf. ver. 3), xxxi. 16.—בּוּשׁ, meant as in ch. iv. 15, without בַּעַל פְּ being on this account the name of a place (for

like their beloved one. 11. Ephraim—their glory shall flee away like birds from the birth, yea from the womb, yea from the conception. 12. For, although they should bring up their sons, I will make them childless, that there shall be no man left; for woe also to themselves when I depart from them. 13. Ephraim, as I look toward Tyre, is a planting in a meadow; but Ephraim shall bring out his children to the slayer. 14. Give them, O Yahveh: what wilt thou give? give them a miscarrying womb and dry breasts! 15. Their wickedness was filled up at Gilgal; for there they became

בית ב' פ'). It is the Moabite god worshipped by obscene lust. —בּשׁת, nickname for בַּעַל; the shame-god, cf. ch. ii. 19.—Idols are usually called שִׁקּוּצִים; the people have become just as abominable as these. As his god is, so the man is!—אֹהֲבָיו, amour, then the paramour himself. Ver. 11. Word-play on Ephraim.—From the first beginnings of human existence its glory will flee away, *i.e.* its multitude of people (Isa. xvii. 4), in which its importance lay.—מִן, therefore not negative in sense, but according to Job iii. 11. The three points of departure form a climax. Ver. 12 follows those who have somehow slipped through in the opposite direction; cf. ch. viii. 7, ix. 12.—מאדם with negative מִן. The land is emptied of men, for even they themselves, the parents (להם), fare badly. שׁוּר for סוּר, substantially like ch. v. 6.—Ewald, Nowack read בְּשׁוּרִי, "when I look away from them," which, however, would be less like Hosea (Del.). Ver. 13, like ver. 12, expands ver. 11. Here, too, Yahveh speaks: Charmingly as I see Ephraim's planting extend toward Tyre, it must surrender its people from this fertile, pleasant dwelling-place (נוה) to the field of death. Its youth will fall in battle.—The fem. שׁתולה, certainly with some uncertainty,= planting? But Hitzig and Nowack no better: "Ephraim, as I see it, is planted like (לְ?) a palm" . . . The Arabic *ṣaur*, small palm, is scarcely here to be transplanted into the Hebrew.—להוציא, Ges. § 132, Anm. 1. Ver. 14. The prophet would fain request some blessing for his people, but bethinks himself that he cannot ask the blessing of children, but the opposite, that few may fall victims to its terrible fate. Whoever seeks the people's good now wishes it scanty offspring, so that the intercession certainly takes the form of an imprecation. Ver. 15. כל, sum, aggregate.

hateful to me for the evil of their doing; I will drive them from my house, will love them no more: all their leaders are rebels. 16. Ephraim is worm-eaten, their root dried up, they shall bear no fruit; though they should bring forth, I will kill the darlings of their womb. 17. My God shall reject them, because they listened not to him; and they shall wander about among the heathen.

X. 1. Israel is a luxuriant vine, which formed fruit for itself. The more fruit he received, the more altars he made; the better it was with his land, the better carved pillars they set up. 2. Their heart is divided; now they shall suffer for it: he will utterly destroy their altars, lay waste their carved pillars. 3. For now shall they say, "We have no king, for Yahveh we have not feared; and *the* king—what should he do

Their wickedness culminated at *Gilgal*, the place where, according to ch. iv. 15, Judah also let itself be misled. The precise events alluded to are unknown to us.—*From my house*, see ch. viii. 1, not only from the land (ch. ix. 3), but also from my household.—*Their leaders* . . . in Isa. i. 23 said of the princes of Judah. Ver. 16. From ver. 10 the figure of the vine is kept in mind (in ch. x. 1 expressly resumed); for הכה means struck as by a destructive insect, Jonah iv. 7.—בלי, Kethib to be retained; cf. ch. viii. 7 and ix. 12. Ver. 17. אלהי, *my* God, no longer theirs; similarly ch. ix. 8.—נדד applies here (differently ch. vii. 18) to the unsteady wandering of those dispersed among the nations.

Chapter X.

Ver. 1. The figure of the *vine* (cf. on ch. ix. 16) glances back at the course of outward prosperity, with which most unnaturally the growth of sin and internal corruption kept equal step. The more the nation advanced, the more idolatrous practices flourished.—בקק, to overflow, to spread, grow rankly.—The passage proves irrefutably that the multiplying of altars (cf. ch. viii. 11), in the prophet's eyes, involves just as culpable unfaithfulness to Yahveh as the making of idols. Cf. on ch. viii. 12, xii. 12. Ver. 2. חלק on ch. v. 6—עתה on ch. ii. 12. —ערף, properly to break the neck, to give the fatal stroke; here of overturning the altars. Ver. 3 describes the wretched state when they will find themselves without king, and therefore without protection. —*The king* (with open contempt), what can

for us?" 4. They talk proudly, swear falsely, make a treaty; so that judgment shoots up like weeds in the furrows of the field. 5. The inhabitants of Samaria are afraid for the calf-piece of Beth-aven: for his people are sorry for it, and his priests cry aloud for it on account of its glory, because it has departed from it. 6. It also shall be taken to Asshur as a present to king "Combatant;" Ephraim shall procure shame to himself, Israel shall be ashamed of his counsel. 7. Samaria's king vanishes like a chip on the water. 8. And the heights of wickedness shall be destroyed, the sin of Israel. Thorns and briars shall grow upon their altars; and they shall say to the mountains, Cover us; and to the hills, Fall on us!

9. From the days of Gibeah thou hast sinned, O Israel.

he do to help us? Cf. vv. 7, 15, xiii. 10. Ver. 4, on the other hand, continues the description of the present moral corruption: They are wordy heroes (see Isa. lviii. 13), ready enough to take oath, and also for covenant of any kind with strange peoples. From such courses *judgment* everywhere springs up, like tares from every *furrow of the field*. על ח' יש׳ belongs to כראש. Ver. 5. עגלות, plur. of abstractness.—נור as in Job xix. 29, with לְ.—*Beth-Aven*, see ch. iv. 15.—*Its people*, i.e. the congregation of the idol.—כמרים from כֹּמֶר (properly, the blacks?), Aramaic word, only used of priests of illegal cults; differently Syr. *kumrâ* = priests.—גִּיל, elsewhere in joyous dance, here to encircle with vehement lamentings.—The *glory*, which has departed from the calf, is the entire costly apparatus of its worship. Ver. 6. Also *it itself* (אֶת, accus. as often in the passive, Gesen. § 143, 1*a*), will follow the rich tribute as an act of homage. Will they really in their straits also voluntarily surrender their god? Rather the idol itself is carried off in the conquest as an unwilling gift, following the earlier gifts which were sent first, in order to spare the idol; hence the disappointment. The language is ironical. King *Combatant*, see on ch. v. 13. Ver. 7. נדמה on ch. iv. 5; cf. x. 15. According to the accents, מלכה belongs strictly to שמרון, and is subject to the participle Samaria, its king is like a *chip* driving along on broad waters, soon to vanish from the surface; cf. קצפה, Joel i. 7. Ver. 8. The seats of the godless hill-cult are called Israel's sin. Such shame and despair overwhelm the guilty that they would fain be covered by the mountains; similarly Luke xxiii. 30; Rev. vi. 16. Ver. 9. See on ch. ix. 9. *There they stand* defiant

There they stand—should not war against the reprobates overtake them at Gibeah? 10. In my desire I will chastise them; and nations shall be gathered against them, when they are yoked to their two trangressions. 11. But Ephraim is a young cow, accustomed to thresh with pleasure; I drive, notwithstanding, over her neck's beauty: I will yoke Ephraim; Judah shall plough, Jacob shall harrow. 12. Sow to yourselves for righteousness, reap after the rule of kindness; break up for yourselves fresh soil, as it is time to seek Yahveh, until he come and teach you right courses. 13. You have

like the old Benjamites, who took the criminals of Gibeah under their wing; hence the war of vengeance must perforce reach them.—לֹא for הֲלֹא, as also in ch. xi. 15, Hosea indicating a question merely by the tone. Otherwise we should have to take לאֹ־תּ as the thoughts of the insolent and secure standers-by.—*At Gibeah*, where they again took their stand.—עלוה, vowel-transposition (differences of dialect ?) for עולה. Ver. 10. ואסרם, imperf. Kal of יסר, elsewhere Piel; here, for the sake of the word-play, with באסרם (לְ אָסַר, Gen. xlix. 11). The two transgressions are the two calves. Kethib עינתם yields no sense. Delitzsch alludes to the humour of the retribution: They, who deified a beast of burden, are themselves yoked in its place; under the blows of the nations they draw the carriage to Assyria. Ver. 11. New figure suggested by ver. 10: Ephraim is a young pampered heifer, hitherto only used in threshing in sport (לדוש belong also to מלמדה); now the Lord lays on it and Judah the yoke to plough and harrow: there is now hard work.—אהבתי, Ges. § 90, 3*a*.—רכב, Hiphil, to cause to ride, here =to yoke to. Ver. 12. Further figures from tillage: *To sow for righteousness*, i.e. to do good which may be accepted as righteousness; *to reap*, according to the measure of kindness, gentleness, *i.e.* secure his own gain while showing such consideration to others as love commands; *to break up new soil* (Jer. iv. 3 similarly), *i.e.* begin a new life, the opposite of the one hitherto sufficiently described (see ver. 13).—ועת, as *the right time* is often the normal time; עת generally signifies not time indefinitely abstract, but point or space of time definite in contents.—וְ יורה צ, as little as in Joel ii. 23, "to rain righteousness" (see there), but to give direction how you may attain צדק, which man cannot bring about of himself, nor even attain by divine grace, until he strives after the knowledge of God; cf. ch. vi. 3. Ver. 13. Up to now they have always done

ploughed wickedness, reaped knavery, eaten fruit of swindling; for thou trustedst in thy chariots,* in the multitude of thy mighty men. 14. Thus tumult of war rises among thy peoples, and all thy fortresses are stormed, as Shalman stormed Beth-arbel in the day of battle: the mother was cut down on her sons. 15. Such things he does to you, O Bethel, for the wickedness of your wickedness: at daybreak the king of Israel shall have vanished away.

XI. 1. When Israel was a stripling, then I loved him; and out of Egypt I called my son. 2. They called to them,

the opposite in private and political life.—Instead of בדרכך, the LXX have better in several codices ἐν ἅρμασί σου, ברכבך, which was then corrupted into ἁμαρτήμασί σου (Cod. Vat.). Ver. 14. קאם with the א of augment common in Arabic, but very rare in Hebrew.—ישד with Dagesh as in Aramaic, Gesen. § 67, Anm. 8. —שׁד, infin. Kal = שְׁדוֹד.—*Shalman* is most easily taken as an abbreviation of Shalmanassar (Assyr. Salmanu-ussir). This is probably Shalmanassar III., who reigned 783–773 B.C., and undertook a campaign to the "Cedar-land," *i.e.* Lebanon, in 775 B.C., against Damascus 773. Beth-Arbel is then either Arbela on the Tigris near Nineveh, now Irbil (famous for Alexander's battle), or Arbela, near Pella in the east Jordan country (Euseb. *Onomast.*), which is preferable because of the great distance of the former. Schrader (vol. ii. p. 138 ff.) and Nowack, on the contrary, hold the reference to be to the destruction of the latter place by a *Moabite* king Shalman (Assyr. Salamanu), who is mentioned by Tiglathpileser as paying tribute, therefore a contemporary of Hosea. In this case the Moabites must have taken advantage of Israel's weakness after the death of Jeroboam II. and conquered that district. In either case, the history needs to be supplemented by conjecture, as nothing is otherwise known of a destruction of that place.—Ruthless enemies cut down the mother on the sons, whom she is mourning. Ver. 15. The people of *Bethel* correspond to those of Beth-Arbel; the Israelites are addressed as the former, because Bethel was their central place of worship.— —בשחר = in the night.

Chapter XI.

Ver. 1. Cf. ch. ix. 10. Ver. 2. The subj. of קראו is, as כיפניהם and ver. 7 show, the true prophets, who were the medium of

forthwith they went away from their sight: they sacrificed to the Baals, and burnt incense to carved images. 3. And yet it was I that taught Ephraim to walk, I took* him in my* arms; but they knew not that I healed them. 4. With cords of a man I drew them, with bands of love; and was to them like those who take away the yoke on their cheeks, and stooped down to him to give him to eat. 5. Should he not return to the land of Egypt, and Asshur—*he* is his king—because they refused to turn? 6. And the sword shall revolve in his cities, and shall destroy his bars, and shall consume (them) because of their plottings. 7. My people is

God's call to others; they had the audacity to sacrifice to the Baals before the eyes of these monitors. Ver. 3. This took place despite the fatherly love and care which God showed them.—תרגל (Tiphel), to teach to go.—קחם, explained by Kimchi and others as aphæresis for לְקָחָם; better read זרועתי ע' אֶקָּחֵם, after LXX (Nowack). Certainly LXX has sing. αὐτόν inexactly. The *healing* then refers to the father, who took up the child that had fallen. Ver. 4. Even his means of chastisement were chosen in love, not those of mere violence, such as are used to beasts: *cords of a man, bands of love,* such as one draws men with in love (2 Sam. vii. 14). The figure of the cord, which rules in the next words, is already present in thought here. Kindhearted peasants, after the work is done, take the heavy yoke off the animal and spread food before it. כמרימי, in form as in ch. iv. 4, v. 10.—ואט for וְאַטֶּה from נטה (imperf. of a continuous, often repeated action): I stooped and gave to eat, *i.e.* put the food low that the animal might eat in comfort. אוכיל, Gesen. § 68, 2, Anm. 1. Ver. 5. In view of such heaven-defying ingratitude must they not return into the exile, from which the Lord once delivers them. As Hosea regularly names Egypt and Assyria as the lands of exile (ch. ix. 3), לא cannot negative, but is = הֲלֹא as in ch. x. 9. LXX read לו, joining it with what goes before. Ver. 6. וחלה, perf. cons., elsewhere milel, perf. sing. fem. of חוּל.—Ephraim's *bars* are its strong defences, which are destroyed in war.—Their *plottings* are their perfidious schemes, projects. Ver. 7. *Is prone,* properly is devoted (of irresistible, incorrigible inclination) to turning away from me (genit. obj.). משובה always *in malam partem,* like שׁוּב, ch. vii. 16; there also עַל, adv. *sursum.* *The callers,* see

prone to backslide from me; and though they call it upward, it rises not up together. 8. How shall I give thee up, Ephraim; how surrender thee, Israel! How shall I make thee like Admah, how set thee like Zeboim! My heart is turned within me, my compassions are stirred together! 9. I will not let loose my fierce wrath, nor destroy Ephraim again: for I am God, and not a man; a holy one in thy midst: and will not come in fierce anger. 10. They shall go after Yahveh as after a roaring lion; for he shall roar, and the sons

on ver. 2.—Does not *arise* (ch. v. 6), pays no attention to the call upward.

Ver. 8 presents another sudden transition from wrath to pity. God cannot bring Himself to make an end of His people as He did of those towns of the foretime. *Admah and Zeboim*, towns in the Siddim valley destroyed with Sodom; cf. Gen. xix. 24 f. with ch. x. 19. Admah and Zeboim are expressly mentioned as destroyed only in Deut. xxix. 22. God's compassionate heart struggles against the execution of strict justice. Cf., as the ground of the work of atonement, τὸ πολὺ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος, 1 Pet. i. 3; τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ, Eph. i. 7.—כמר, to grow hot, Niph.: to be excited (according to others: to be contracted); cf. the Piel in Talmudic Hebr.: to cause to glow. נחומים as רחמים, the most tender and delicate emotions of love, such as a father or mother feels on seeing a child suffer. On the anthropopathy see at the close.—Ver. 8 f. is spoken already, not ver. 10 merely, on the supposition of the judgment always threatened by the prophet. In view of the judgment on Ephraim the Lord is moved with compassion, and will not again (אשוב, ver. 9) make it feel His power to punish, and therefore the full weight of His wrath. Ver. 9. *For I am God.* Only divine love and holiness can here forgive everything and avoid wrath.—קדוש, *a holy One*, therefore free from human vengeance. See at close.—עיר, here not town, but *agitation*, boiling heat (cf. ch. vii. 4, הֵעִיר, to heat), *i.e.* wrath boiling over. Ver. 10 speaks plainly of the time when the captivity shall be at an end. Then will God powerfully (as with lion-voice), yet lovingly, give the sign to gather together in every quarter where they have been scattered; and although trembling at His majesty, they will not flee from but draw nigh to that majesty, eagerly longing for salvation. Cf. the mixture of feelings in ch. iii. 5.—*From the sea*, i.e. from the west, where many exiles have long lived; cf. Joel iii. 6.

shall come trembling from the sea. 11. They shall flutter like birds from Egypt, and like doves from the land of Asshur: and I will set them at home in their dwelling-places, is the oracle of Yahveh.

Exposition.

Contents of ix. 10–xi. 11. First Series of Angry Retrospects. 1. Israel once Lovely in God's sight, now Unhappy through its own fault, ix. 10–17; 2. Israel once Flourishing through God's goodness, now doomed to Destruction, x. i.–8; 3. Israel, shameless as in the worst days of its history, must feel the sharpness of penal severity, x. 9–15; 4. God's Love from of old will at last triumph over all unfaithfulness, ch. xi.

With ix. 10 (cf. already ix. 9) begins a series of oracles treating in common of the issue of a historical retrospect. The prophet directs his gaze to the divine mercy once shown to his people, which only enhances indignation at its treachery and ingratitude, and confirms the certainty of approaching retribution. While it has always, looked at closely, repaid God's benefits in this base way, its corruption has reached its climax at the present. Thus, these oracles are essentially condemnatory in tone. But, as everywhere in Hosea, grace at last gains the mastery, when sin has exhibited all its power. Comforting himself by God's bottomless mercy revealed to Israel from the first, the prophet comes in ch. xi. to promise its triumph over all the sin of his nation.—As to the date of these oracles, they are to be assigned to the same period as the foregoing ones, and so to the reign of Menahem. The relation to Assyria is still the same, x. 6. Nothing compels us to come down to the time of Pekah or Hosea, the last king; and this is indeed forbidden by the consideration, that the entirely different phase of things under Pekah, who

Ver. 11. Birds fly at first timidly to their old home, then they get courage and soon feel at home again.

made war on Judah in league with the Syrians, considering the attitude which Hosea assumed to that neighbour-kingdom, must have had very great influence on his discourses.

The first oracle, ix. 10 ff., recalls to mind how the Lord in the fulness of His love once in the wilderness made this nation of Israel His own, and how it then so early turned its back on Him. Ephraim inherited this bias from ancient Israel; and hence in ver. 11, where the menace of punishment begins, this people of to-day without more ado takes the place of the old one.—Ch. x. 1 ff. reminds of Israel-Ephraim's splendid expansion and wonderful growth, which, alas! had for its result just as great an expansion in sacrilegious worship and growth in the spirit of self-glorification, so that now the idolatrous kingdom must perish. — Ch. x. 9 ff. adduces a parallel from the time of the judges, when the godless character of the nation was revealed in most terrible fashion. Now the whole nation has adopted the evil ways of the Benjamites, who defied the divine judgment and placed themselves on the side of the criminals of Gibeah. Therefore a reckoning must now overtake Israel, and hard times come also on Judah.—Ch. xi. 1 ff. emphasises how God cared for His people from tender infancy with fatherly love, and never omitted to send gracious warning and chastening—without success. The land must therefore be given over to vengeful foes. But beyond this judgment the prophet sees divine love triumphant. That love cannot persuade itself to utterly abandon and destroy the beloved people. Because the Lord is God, lifted far above human passion, He can forgive even here; and He does so, because His deepest essence is love. He will bring back the scattered ones from the lands of banishment (parallel to iii. 5). The angry retrospect thus turns into a penetrating glance into God's wondrous nature and a glorious outlook over a radiant future.—Ch. xi. 8 contains a striking transference of human feelings to God. How such anthropopathic passages, so frequent in the prophets,

are to be regarded, is well stated by H. Schultz, *Altt. Theol.*, 2 Ausg. p. 464 f. (Eng. transl. ii. 108): "No personally conscious life can be pictured without such designations (as love, hate, jealousy, etc.). When they are taken away, nothing is left but the cheerless frost of an ideal system, at which piety is unable to warm itself. The expressions supply something, certainly in inadequate form and yet in the only form possible in popular speech, which is more important than all philosophical speculations about God; they give a glimpse into the fulness of an inner divine life,—the same life which serves to explain the ways of divine revelation to us. They show us the personal God, whose heart overflows with love to His own, love which cannot see itself rejected with cold indifference,—whose fidelity and truth appear even in opposition against evil—just the God whom the entire sacred history preaches to us, and whose most perfect revelation is the sacred and loving death of Jesus." Were God indeed incapable of the deepest emotions of love, He would be poorer than man; and were He incapable of wrath, the events of history could not be traced back to Him. For the rest, the inner, positive right of anthropomorphic and anthropopathic expressions lies in the affinity between God and man affirmed in Gen. i. 26 f. On the other hand, whatever unfree, impure, sinful elements adhere to such feelings in human experience, passion proper, must not, as the instructive passage Hos. xi. 9 emphasises, be applied to the God who, as holy, is raised above such feelings.

Further Retrospects, and Prospect of a Time of Grace, Chs. xii.–xiv.

XII. 1. They of Ephraim have compassed me about with hypocrisy, and they of the house of Israel with deceit: whilst

Chapter XII.

Ver. 1*b* contains no praise of Israel, as Luther and many of the older expositors think, but certainly a qualified con-

Judah is still always unstable with God, yea with the Most Holy, the Unchangeable One. 2. Ephraim feeds on wind, and follows after east wind: the whole day he multiplies lies and violence; and they make alliance with Asshur, whilst oil is carried away to Egypt. 3. And Yahveh has a contention with Judah, and will reckon with Jacob according to his ways; according to his deeds he will requite him. 4. In the womb he took hold of his brother's heel, and in his manhood he strove with God. 5. Yea, he strove with the angel and overcame; he wept, and besought him with tears,—at Bethel he met with us, yea there he spoke with

demnation, which does not preclude such a repentance as took place under Hezekiah. רוד (cf. Jer. ii. 31), to wander about unsteadily, without restraint, applies here to the inconstancy of their obedience. They would serve Yahveh, but unite therewith heathen laxity.—עִם as in ch. ix. 8.—This vacillating policy consists in flagrant opposition to the All-holy, faithful God. The plural קדוֹשִׁים (formed after אֱלֹהִים) as in Josh. xxiv. 19 (Kimchi). The LXX is different but not better; Bredenkamp partially agrees with LXX, *Ges. u. Proph.* p. 154. Yet another reading by Cornill, see *Zeitsch. f. die alt. Wiss.* 1887, p. 285 ff. Ver. 2. Cf. ch. viii. 7. They *feed*, live thereon, delight therein. *East wind* in Ezek. xxvii. 26, *Assyr.* and *Egypt* as in ch. vii. 11. *Oil*, a valuable product, was exported; here sent as tribute.—יֻבַל, Hophal, as in ch. x. 6, to be brought in stately pomp. Ver. 3. רִיב as in ch. iv. 1.—Is about to visit, in form like ch. ix. 13. The name *Jacob* is not seldom used in regard to Judah, in contrast with the use of "Israel" for Ephraim. Yet vv. 8, 13 f. show that here it is by no means merely Judah, but the entire nation of that day, that is opposed to the progenitor named. Ver. 4. The latter, the self-understood subject, took hold, as his name affirms, of his brother's heel at birth (Gen. xxv. 26), to indicate that he would not yield to, but contend with him in spiritual rank. He then in the vigour of manhood (אוֹן) strove with God Himself for the highest blessing (Gen. xxxii. 25 ff.), as his name Israel affirms, in allusion to which the rare word שָׂרָה is used here, as in the primary passage Gen. xxxii. 29. Ver. 5. The divine appearance, in which God presented Himself to sight and touch (Gen. xxxii. 31), is called *angel*, as in Gen. xvi. 7, as such a becoming visible in human form on God's part cannot have been without a medium, but God must have availed Himself

us. 6. And Yahveh, the God of hosts, Yahveh is his name of renown. 7. But do thou turn to thy God: keep mercy and right, and wait on thy God continually! 8. Canaan—in his hand is a deceitful balance; he loves to exact. 9. And Ephraim says, I have surely become rich, wealth has come to me; all my acquisitions shall cause me no transgression

of an organ of revelation. Israel prevailed in the struggle according to the witness of Gen. xxxii. 29, certainly according to Hosea's supplementary explanation, only by tears of repentance and suppliant petition for unmerited grace.—At *Bethel*, which bears here its title of honour as the renowned scene of patriarchal revelation, He met us (according to the parallelism not *him*, therefore suffixes as in Job xxxi. 15). The imperfects are not futures of promise, but under the influence of what precedes may allude to the frequent appearances of God at Bethel; yet Gen. xxviii. is less pointed to than xxxv. 1 ff. as the order shows (after the scene at Jabbok). In Gen. xxxv. Jacob brought also his household, the root-stock of the later nation, before God at Bethel, which better explains the first person. Del. compares Ps. lxvi. 6. To read עִמּוֹ instead of עִמָּנוּ, after Syr., Aq., Symm., Theod., is unadvisable. In the translation: "They wept and cried to me, in the house of On (the Egyptian? cf. Isa. xix. 18) they found me, and there word was spoken to them," the LXX perhaps had in view, quite inadmissibly, the people complaining in Egypt. Ver. 6. It cannot be the Lord's fault that events took an unhappy turn. He is the unchangeably Exalted One made known in His lofty titles. "*God of hosts*," see Isa. i. 9.—זִכְרוֹ, His title of honour, at whose mention one should bow in deepest reverence; cf. Ex. iii. 15. The divine name *Yahveh* expresses most perfectly the absoluteness of the divine being and rule, whose unconditioned trustworthiness excludes all thought of inconstancy. Ver. 7, introduced with antithetical וְאַתָּה, indicates the course of conduct due to such a God. Ver. 8. The actual conduct of the existing nation is denoted by the reproachful name *Canaan*. Instead of seeking high gifts of heaven like its progenitor, it strives only after money and goods, like the huckstering nation of the Canaanites, whose land it has taken and whose evil ways it has adopted. Ver. 9. With this debasing selfishness the nation, here mentioned by its true name, unites arrant self-righteousness and self-conceit (Rev. iii. 17). אַךְ opposes to the reproach of wealth unjustly acquired the result boasted of: I have acquired wealth without being

that were an offence. 10. But I am Yahveh, thy God from the land of Egypt; I will make thee again dwell in tents, as in the days of the feast. 11. And I have spoken to the prophets; and I have given visions abundantly, and spoken in parables by the prophets. 12. If Gilead is wickedness, they shall be mere vanity. If they slay bullocks at Gilgal, their altars shall lie like stoneheaps in the furrows of the field. 13. But Joseph fled to the pasture of Aram; and Israel served for a wife, and for a wife he kept (sheep). 14. On the other hand, by a prophet Yahveh brought up

judicially liable to the charge of the dishonesty usually mixed with the process. חטא is an offence falling under legal penalty.—ימצאו, in similar sense to מצא above, to reach, turn to something.—Thus, even in the use of evil means they have laboured to preserve a certain appearance of legality, by which, however, the holy God, whom they knew from the time of Egypt and Sinai, cannot be deceived. On the contrary, He will punish them again with the loss of home: they shall again dwell in tents as at the feast of Tabernacles (Lev. xxiii. 42 f.), of course, really less comfortably, as in the days of the wandering, of which that feast was a memorial. Ver. 11. God has not omitted to give gracious revelations and loving instruction; cf. ch. xi. 2, 7 (ch. vi. 5).—דמה, Piel, here: to form parables, speak in oracles adapted to the power of comprehension. Ver. 12. *Gilead*, ch. vi. 8.—און, here moral and religious, שוא, physical and outward, feebleness. היו, according to the parallelism following, *not* to be applied to something that has already happened (the invasion of Tiglathpileser).—*Gilgal*, see ch. iv. 15. Also the apodosis, introduced by גַּם, must necessarily contain a Nemesis for what is spoken of in the protasis; consequently the sacrificing of bullocks at Gilgal must have seemed to the prophet wrong in itself, not merely on account of unnamed secondary circumstances; see on ch. viii. 12, x. 1. —The righteous retribution is intimated by the word-play in בגלגל, בגלים—זבחו, מזבחות'.—*In the furrows*, etc., as in ch. x. 4. Ver. 13. And how many more evidences of divine grace had Israel enjoyed than its progenitor! Vv. 13, 14 state this contrast in order to confirm the reproach which accuses Israel of unfaithfulness, whilst that progenitor did not desert his Lord. The contrast consists in this, that Jacob had to flee to a strange country, whereas God restored His people from a strange country; that Jacob's comfort and reward for his

Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet it was kept. 15. Ephraim has provoked to wrath most bitterly; and his Lord will force upon him his bloodguiltiness, and requite him his abuse.

XIII. 1. When Ephraim only spoke, men trembled; he towered high in Israel. Then he transgressed in Baal, and died. 2. And now they transgressed anew, and made themselves a molten image of their silver, carved pillars according to* their skilfulness, work of smiths all and sundry: to such they speak; slayers of men, they kiss

pastoral service in the strange land was merely a *wife*, whereas Israel had a *prophet* for a shepherd; Jacob *tended*, Israel *was* tended; there it was for a *wife*, here by a *prophet*. Ver. 15. All the more the apostasy of the ungrateful nation of necessity provoked God's wrath; cf. הבעים, Deut. xxxii. 16. The subject to יטוש comes at the close; properly, will thrust upon him, push with violence (opposite of נישׂא).—In וחרפתו the suff. is objective: the despite done to the Lord He causes to recoil on the nation.

Chapter XIII.

Ver. 1. In this retrospect *Ephraim* is more particularly taken into view. In ancient days, before the monarchy, he only needed to speak and all trembled (as to the construction, cf. Gen. iv. 7), men were filled with fear and respect for his power (cf. *e.g.* Judg. viii. 1 ff.). Lofty, *eminent*, he was נָשִׂיא among the tribes (Gen. xlix. 26). As to the Kal, see on ch. v. 6. But even at that time the strength of this most powerful tribe was broken by Baal-worship: he died; cf. Gen. ii. 17. Ver. 2 glances at the later time after Jeroboam. Instead of בתבונם (with suppressed ת fem., Job xi. 9), read with many codices and editions (LXX, etc.) כתבונם: they applied their whole talent thereto.—הֵם, ch. viii. 9.—אמר, cf. 2 Chron. i. 2, xxxii. 24. Their perversity goes still further: *slayers of men kiss calves*, instead of slaying calves and kissing men, as nature dictates. The *kiss* of homage is meant (Ps. ii. 12 and often), and the slaying of human sacrifices, the offering of children to Baal-Moloch, which was soon current in the southern kingdom (since Ahaz, 2 Kings xvi. 3), and according to this passage had already stained the history of the northern kingdom also; an easily credible event, considering how near the example of the Phœnicians was. In the days of Hosea himself it can

calves! 3. Therefore shall they perish like a morning cloud, and like the dew which is soon up and away, like the chaff which flies from the threshing-floor, and like smoke from the lattice. 4. But I am Yahveh, thy God from the land of Egypt; and thou knowest no God beside me, nor is there any Saviour apart from me. 5. I knew thee in the wilderness, in the land of burning wastes. 6. As they had their pasture, they were satisfied; when they were filled, their heart was lifted up; therefore have they forgotten me. 7. Then I became like a lion to them; like a panther I lurk

only have occurred at most in single instances, as he does not elsewhere denounce it. The blood-sheddings of ch. xii. 15 are otherwise explained, and there is no reference to it in ch. xii. 12.—The explanation recently come into favour, "sacrificial men" (sacrificers of the genus man, Wellhausen), is to be rejected, as it offends greatly and equally against the usage and the logic of language; the participle of this verb is always united in the genitive with the object of sacrifice only, and the examples of genitival connection cited by Nowack are of another class (Micah v. 4; Prov. xv. 20), as there the emphasis of the qualification lies on the narrower category, here on אדם. Ver. 3. Then the end quickly comes. Beside the figures of transiency repeated from ch. vi. 4, those of the chaff scattered (Poel: to drive away, intrans. here only) from the threshing-floor, and the smoke mounting to the lattice, which also serves as chimney, and at once dissipated, are used. Ver. 4. All this is the consequence of their falling away from the old and proved God (cf. ch. xii. 10), the only One whom, in distinction from useless images, they have known (ידע) as true God. The antithesis recalls Deutero-Isaiah. Ver. 5. In those days of first love the *knowledge* was mutual, on God's part gracious adoption of this people (ch. ix. 10, xi. 1), whom He made His ward in the desert, and to whom He there showed His loving care in a specially striking way, as in the land of glowing heat (root לאב, to burn, glow; cf. להב) they were cast entirely on His mercy. Ver. 6. In כמרעיתם the כְּ need not be taken in the temporal sense as in ver. 1, but = in accordance with their pasture, *i.e.* in correspondence to their good pasture, which I vouchsafed to them in their land. Prosperity led to arrogance, and this to the forgetting of their benefactor. So Moses foretold according to Deut. xxxii. 10 ff. Ver. 7. As they have despised the good shepherd, he

in the way. 8. I will fall upon them like a bear that is robbed of her young; and will rend the caul of their heart, and consume them there like a lioness: the wild beast of the field shall rip them up. 9. It is thy destruction, Israel, that thou against me, against thy help. . . . 10. Where now is thy king, that he may deliver thee in all thy cities; and thy judges, of whom thou saidst, "Give me a king and rulers"? 11. I will give thee a king in my wrath, and take him away in my fury. 12. Ephraim's guilt is bound up, his sin well-preserved. 13. Pangs of a travailing woman shall come on

becomes to them a beast of prey. אשור, verbally, as in Jer. v. 26; most of the old versions incorrectly: "in the way to Asshur;" so still Hitzig. Ver. 8. *Robbed of her young*, and therefore excited with passion.—*Caul of their heart, pericardium, præcordia.* The end of the verse suggests a battle-field, where beasts of prey attack the corpses as the last avengers of God. Ver. 9 does not give a complete thought. Probably the language is interrupted by the extreme feeling of pain: "It has destroyed thee, that thou against me, thy help," hast sinned; yet the word in question might also be omitted by a copyist who understood the following אהי as in ver. 7. Ver. 10. The latter word is here not a shortened imperf. of היה, but as in ver. 14 (only, however, in Hosea), interrogative particle = אַיֵּה, as confirmed by the following אבוא, which stands after interrogative words. On the thought cf. ch. x. 3.—*In all thy cities* his help was needed, but he was nowhere to be found in the time of need. Now it is plainly seen how futile the kingdom is in which they set their confidence, and which they besought of God so fervently in Jeroboam's days and since. Ver. 11. God humoured them; but these kings who were wrung from Him (ch. viii. 4) He gave to them in anger; they were not kings by God's grace, but by His displeasure; and when He took them away again, things became still worse; there was wild anarchy and coercion. Ver. 12. *Bound up*, as *tied together and preserved* in a bundle; *i.e.* the case is closed, the guilt well preserved, so that nothing is forgotten on the day of vengeance. Ver. 13 speaks of the last crisis, which has still to come to the kingdom of Ephraim. It might lead to a happy regeneration, if Ephraim were not so foolish. Ephraim is first compared to a mother, on whom pangs come, then to a child which does not present itself in birth at the right time (עֵת, cf. with Nowack, Job xxii.

him: he is a son without understanding; for when it is time, he presents not himself at the place of breaking out of children. 14. From the hand of the underworld I will redeem them, from death ransom them. Where are thy plagues, O Death? Where is thy sting, O Underworld? Repentance shall be hid from my eyes! 15. For although he is a fruit-tree among brethren, an east wind shall come; Yahveh's wind rises up from the wilderness, so that his fountain is

16, and Orelli, *Synon. der Zeit*, pp. 18 ff., 47 ff.), so sacrificing the mother's life and its own, on which account it is called *unwise*, in the figure improperly, in the application all the more pertinently.—With עמד, cf. *e.g.* Ezek. xxii. 30 (Nowack). Ver. 14. Difficult and very differently explained. Some take the first double clause as a question: "Should I deliver them," etc. (so the Rabbins and Simson, Schmoller, Wünsche); thus the saying would be only a threat; but the interrogative sense is not probable. If, on the other hand, an ultimate deliverance from the power of death is promised, it seems natural to take the following אהי, as in ver. 10, as a sign of disdain (Nowack also). But this is opposed by the conclusion נחם and ver. 15. *Repentance is hid from my eyes* (cf. the opposite in Gen. vi. 13), means, according to what follows: My sentence of death is irrevocable (Jer. iv. 28). The explanation, "In repentance he (death) shall be hid from my eyes," is more forced. We therefore take אהי in the sense, that God summons up the plagues (דֶּבֶר) and every deadly power (קטב, properly, "sting"; also in Ps. xci. 6 along with plague, almost synonymous) of Hades, because He has for once irrevocably decided to surrender the nation into the hand of death, and will only redeem them from the entire state of death in the future (cf. ch. vi. 1 f.). After the advent of redemption from death by Christ's resurrection, the terrifying אהי changes of itself into a cry of triumph, 1 Cor. xv. 55. Ver. 15. Perhaps אֲחִים (from אחו, reed-grass) should be read, with Rashi, Del. *et al.*, intimating abundance of water in the place (cf. Isa. xliv. 4). At all events, Ephraim is compared to a fruitful tree, with a play on its name, and a reminiscence of Gen. xlix. 22.—*Wind of Yahveh*, by its violence making known its author—the Assyrian.—Its *fountain*, from which the tree drew its strength.—The last clause speaks without figure (like ch. xiv. 1, which should be joined with this verse) of wanton cruelty on the part of the victors (cf. ch. x. 14; Isa. xiii. 16;

dried, and his spring dried up: he shall carry away the treasure of all precious things.

XIV. 1. Samaria must suffer punishment, because she has rebelled against her God; by the sword shall they fall, their children shall be dashed in pieces, their women with child ripped up.

2. Turn again, O Israel, to Yahveh, thy God; for thou hast fallen by thy evil doing. 3. Take with you—words, and turn again to Yahveh! Say ye to him, "Do thou forgive all guilt, and be gracious again; so will we render bullocks—our lips! 4. Asshur cannot save us; we will not ride on horses; and will no longer say 'Our God' to the work of our own hands, as in thee the orphan finds mercy." 5. I will heal their backsliding, will love them freely: for my wrath is

Amos i. 13), such as was witnessed even among Israelites under Menahem, 2 Kings xv. 16.

Chapter XIV.

Ver. 2. Cf. ch. vi. 1. עד, as in Joel ii. 12, interchanges with אֶל, properly stronger than the latter. Ver. 3. *Take with you*, not great gifts, but *words* of sincere penitence like the following.—כָּל, boldly before the verb: utterly and completely do thou forgive sin.—*Put on kindness* as thy manner toward us (cf. ch. x. 6); so rightly Hitz., Del.—Elsewhere often incorrectly: "Accept a gift," namely from us, or, "Take it well."—*Bullocks, our lips*, mentioned as object of thank-offering, *i.e.* the praise and confession of our lips instead of bullocks. The LXX, stumbling at the somewhat harsh mode of expression, translated as if it said פְּרִי. In this way the prophet wishes to express, as already by קחו דברים, a contrast to material offerings, and the higher value of spiritual, as in Ps. xl. 6 ff., lxix. 30 f., and elsewhere. Ver. 4, spoken by the nation now grown wise, no longer expecting its help from the world or from false gods, but only from the God who can and will help the most helpless. Ver. 5. The desire to be reconciled to God is anticipated by His loving purpose. He promises beforehand *to heal their backsliding*, which is here regarded as an injury they have sustained.—נדבה, properly = spontaneously, *i.e.* without their needing to buy my love by their gifts.

turned away from him. 6. I will be like the dew to Israel; that it may blossom like the lily, and strike its roots like Lebanon. 7. Let its shoots spread, and its stateliness be like that of an olive-tree, and let it have a scent like Lebanon. 8. They that dwell in its shadow shall again call corn to life, and shoot forth like the vine; its fame shall be like that of wine of Lebanon. 9. Ephraim, what has he * still to do with idols? I have answered him, and I look upon him. I am like a green cypress; in me shall thy fruit be found. 10. Who is wise to understand this? Who is intelligent to know it? For

Ver. 6. This divine love pours itself out so richly and fruitfully on Israel, like the dew, that Israel blooms with the splendour and wealth of *the lily*, which, as was early pointed out by Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxi. 5, belongs to the noble and most rapidly multiplying plants, and was the finest ornament of the land. With this God's people combines the immovableness of Lebanon, having in a sense as firm roots as the latter. Ver. 7. While the trunk is so firm, the shoots from the root strike out on all sides (Ps. lxxx. 11). The *scent* of Lebanon, with its wealth of wood and plant; also in Cant. iv. 11. Ver. 8. יָשֻׁבוּ, best connected with יחיו. The latter rarely, to call wheat into life, *i.e.* to cultivate. The desolated land is again brought under tillage.—זִכְרוֹ, the suff., refers to its growth, which is as famous as the *Lebanon wine;* cf. Ezek. xxvii. 18. Ver. 9. מַה׳, construction as in Jer. ii. 18. "What more have I to do with idols?" means: I will no longer ask after them, no longer dispute with thee about them (opposite in ch. xiii. 12). LXX translate more easily, as if it said לוֹ instead of לִי; Ewald and Nowack rightly prefer this, as the emphasised I then stands in fine contrast to the idols. Ephraim will have in its God all the refuge it can desire and an inexhaustible spring of blessings, so that it can no longer be tempted to cast a sidelong glance at dead idols. Read לְעֻצַּבִּים after codices (Baer, *ad loc.*) and Complutensian.—שׁוּרוּ, of a look of loving care, cf. Job xxxv. 13.—The *cypress*, with its perpetual *green*, is an image of God's unchangeable fidelity; the image is heightened by the statement that *this* tree bears enjoyable fruit.—*Thy fruit* = fruit for thee. All fruit which Israel delights in grows thereon. Ver. 10. אֵלֶּה refers to the revelations contained in the foregoing oracles. This way of divine grace is not intelligible to every one. Only the intelligent and docile, who inquire for God's ways, find them *straight*, perfect in themselves and full

the ways of Yahveh are straight, and the just shall walk therein; but sinners shall fall therein.

Exposition.

Contents of chs. xii.–xiv.: Further Retrospects and Final Prospect of a Time of Grace. 1. The humbling Example of the patriarch Jacob, ch. xii.; 2. Ephraim's Misfortune, xiii. 1–xiv. 1; 3. the Crisis of Grace as a last Exhortation, xiv. 2–10.

What was said of the previous oracles on p. 59 applies to these as to the time of their origin. Cf. the similarity of the political situation, xii. 2, xiv. 4 with vii. 11, etc. Further illustrations of the present time by the past follow. And first of all, in ch. xii. (in the fifth of these historical retrospects) the patriarch Jacob is considered under the ideal aspect of his conflict; the present spirit of his posterity is so widely different that they do not deserve to be called Jacob, but Canaan, because of their low huckstering ways. Here also the purpose is to condemn the whole nation, Ephraim especially (xii. 14). The description of xii. 8, 9 finds its best illustration and evidence in modern Judaism, which is so utterly faithless to its great past and religious mission, and absorbed in the reckless pursuit of material profit, not without preserving a certain show of legality.—The last form, taken by the accusation of Ephraim-Israel, xiii. 1 ff., transports us (as the sixth retrospect) to the time before the monarchy, when this tribe had the hegemony, and recalls how even then Baal-worship was its ruin. Since that time it has not improved. The new rise of Ephraim under Jeroboam I. and its history so far are marked by image-worship, which is no better than idolatry; hence no blessing rested on its rule, which hastens to a sudden end. Now the kingdom is ripe

of healing to man; they shall walk therein, act according thereto. The unfaithful stumble at God's leadings, and so come to harm.

for destruction, which it will not escape, as God will only again redeem it when it has fallen a prey to Hades.

Yet the comforting exhortation to repent is even now not suppressed, but forms the hopeful conclusion, xiv. 2 ff. The condition of return to a state of favour is, and remains, nothing but a penitent spirit, that turns with sorrow from its former wanderings and draws nigh with earnest desire to its God, who requires not outward gifts, but regards the heart and delights in a sacrifice of the lips which flows from the heart. When once Israel enters on this path, it shall enjoy the Lord's unfailing kindness in the richest measure. Thus here also, as everywhere in Hosea, grace has the last word. Although the entire existing Church and community may succumb to the fatal judgment, the redemption of His people, and the restoration of untroubled, glorious fellowship between the Lord and them will yet be the end of the ways, now so dark, in which He is leading them.

JOEL.

Introduction.

Joel (יוֹאֵל from יְהוֹ = יהוה and אֵל: Yahveh is God) is called *son of Pethuel* (ch. i. 1), to distinguish him from other bearers of this common name. Of father and son nothing is said elsewhere. But it is clear from the latter's prophetic writing that he lived in Jerusalem, appearing there as a prophet on occasion of a plague of locusts, and that his preaching of repentance was attended with success. That Joel belonged to the priestly tribe of Levi has been inferred, without sufficient ground, from the lively interest he manifests in divine worship.

The date of this prophet has been very differently defined. While many regard his booklet as the oldest prophetic writing preserved to us (about the middle of the ninth century), others see in it one of the latest in the canon (fifth century ?). In our opinion there are plain signs that Joel's oracles belong generally to the same period as Obadiah's, but somewhat later. The political horizon, which appears in Joel iv., is the same as in Obadiah. Jerusalem has been taken and plundered by heathen peoples. The rude conquerors practised wild orgies on the sacred mount. Many Judæans were sold into slavery. But the temple still stands; the land is still well peopled, and in Joel's days had already fairly recovered from the conquest when the new calamity of drought and the locust-plague fell upon it. The peoples, to whose appetite for plunder Jerusalem fell victim, are not openly mentioned;

save that, in agreement with Obadiah, Joel states how Edom gladly joined in the attack and fell on the Judæans settled in its territory. Besides Edom, they make both Phœnicians and Philistines take part in injuring Judah. These were especially prominent in carrying on the slave-trade, which brought the captive Jews to the farther west (to the Javanese). There is also mention of the old hereditary foe, Egypt (Joel iv. 19). That allied nations of different kinds had assaulted Jerusalem, is probable from the assembling of the Goyim in the valley of Jehoshaphat (iv. 2). On the other hand, there is no trace in Obadiah or Joel of a suggestion that the Babylonians, or the Assyrians, or the Syrians were the properly conquering and deporting enemy, or that the bulk of the captives were carried to the east. This tells against any reference to the Babylonian captivity or the Assyrian deportation. At most Joel iv. 2 might compel us to come so far down. But these expressions rather intimate that different peoples took part in the deportation and annexation, and may yet, unless they apply prophetically to the future, be hyperbolical. Putting everything together, the most likely supposition seems to us to be, that Obadiah and Joel iv. refer to the catastrophe that happened under Jehoram announced in 2 Chron. xxi. 16 f. So v. Hofmann, Delitzsch, Kleinert, Keil, König (Herzog's *Encykl.* xiv. 142 ff.), *et al.;* as to Joel iv., also Credner, Hitzig, Steiner, *et al.*

At that time Philistines and tribes of South Arabia fell on Judah and plundered Jerusalem, especially the royal palace, but also, without doubt, the temple treasures (Joel iv. 5); in the twenty-third year of Jehoash the temple seems to have been still without golden and silver vessels (cf. 2 Chron. xxiv. 14 with 2 Kings xii. 7, 14). The Phœnicians bought these precious things from the plundering hordes of Philistines and Arabians, and carried them off, as well as children of the inhabitants; and according to 2 Chron. xxi. 17, even the wives and children of the king were carried away. The Edomites took advantage

of the momentary weakness of Judah to become independent; cf. 2 Kings viii. 20; 2 Chron. xxi. 8. That great bloodshed took place, and the Judæans were slaughtered in great numbers, is seen at once from the fearful revenge taken by Amaziah, 2 Kings xiv. 7; 2 Chron. xxv. 11 f. The Edomites without doubt seized on territory hitherto reckoned as Judæan, so with the Philistines; 2 Chron. viii. 22, xxi. 10, expressly announce the loss of Libnah. Joel iv. 2 is thus explained. The rebuke of Egypt in Joel iv. 19 may have originated in remembrance of the campaign in 1 Kings xiv. 25 f.

But whereas Obadiah has the catastrophe, that happened under Jehoram, directly before his eyes as if it had just transpired, at the time when Joel speaks it lies considerably in the past, although the wounds then received still smart, and the captives then led away are not forgotten. We shall thus best put Joel's discourses in the time of Jehoash, the second successor of Jehoram, and indeed in the first half of his forty years' reign, as no reference is made to the Syrians, who afterwards pressed him hard (2 Kings xii. 18 f.), whereas they stand in the foreground in Amos. This view is supported by the fact that in these discourses the king is nowhere conspicuous, but only priests, elders, and people are spoken of, which is most easily explained if these things happened in the earliest years of Jehoash, when he was a minor, and stood under the guardianship of the high priest Jehoiada. At that time it is also intelligible why the prophet has not to complain of idolatry or other gross abuse in divine worship.

Credner was the first to vindicate such high antiquity for the prophet (870–865); similarly Winer, Ewald (time of Jehoash), Delitzsch (*circ.* 860), Hitzig (870–860), Kleinert (875–850), Wünsche (860–850), Steiner, Reuss (who, however, fluctuates), *et al.* Hengstenberg and Bleek come a little further down to the time of Amos (*circ.* 800). But in the pre-exilic age there is no period which the book would so

well suit as that of Jehoash. It cannot have originated during the Babylonian exile; on the other hand, modern writers think they can prove the post-exilic origin; so Hilgenfeld, Seinecke, Duhm, Merx, *et al.*, for the most part in connection with the newest Pentateuch hypotheses. But the arguments adduced from this quarter seem to us just as little conclusive as the post-exilic standpoint (which is very differently fixed) is adapted to elucidate and explain Joel iv. That the northern kingdom is not mentioned, is explained by the fact that Joel's work extended only to the southern one, and only a couple of his discourses are preserved to us. How the non-mention of the monarchy may be explained has been already stated. That Jerusalem-Zion is the theocratic centre of the land,—yea, in a sense, of the earth,—from which deliverance and doom issue, is no proof of late origin; for this is not merely the view held by Isaiah from the first, but even by Amos (ch. i. 2), yea by David; and the representation of Wellhausen, to the effect that only long after this king did the temple at Jerusalem raise the claim to be Yahveh's proper abode in the land, is arbitrary; the same may be said of the not seldom repeated assertion, that a pre-exilic prophet could not speak sympathetically of sacrificial rites. On the contrary, these at least greatly exaggerated assertions of the newest criticism must be reduced, even in view of the book of Joel, to far more modest proportions.

Decisive evidence of the pre-exilic origin of the writing is found in the literary references to it. Ezek. xxx. 2 f. is unmistakeably dependent on Joel i. 15, ii. 1 f.; so Jer. xxv. 30 f. on Joel iv. 11, 16. In the same way Isa. lxvi. 18 presupposes Joel iv. 2. Ezek. xlvii. 1 ff. expands Joel iv. 18, and Ezek. xxxviii. 17, xxxix. 8 recalls perhaps especially Joel iv. The dependence of Isa. xiii. 6, 9 (the age of which is certainly debateable) on Joel is probable, whereas an inference can scarcely be drawn from Zeph. i. 14. But the references to this prophet incontestably take us, not only to pre-exilic

times, but even to the time *before Amos*. Amos i. 2 certainly springs from Joel iv. 16; accordingly Amos ix. 13 also is dependent on Joel iv. 18. Cf. also Amos iv. 9, where there is a glance at the plague of locusts, and the expression גזם is used, elsewhere only to be found in Joel. Amos v. 18, 20 implies that the "day of Yahveh," as the day of Israel-Judah's exaltation, as Joel proclaimed it to be in an altogether special way, was already current in the community in the time of Amos, and not seldom the subject of abuse. The notion that a later epigon compiled the book of Joel out of older prophetic literature, is wrecked on the consideration that in Joel everything is of a piece, and the language is just as fresh and inspiring as the connection is original and unforced, which ill comports with tedious mosaic work. Only in ch. iii. 5 do we recognise an express reference to an older prophetic oracle, and that Obadiah's. Ewald has rightly pointed to the prophet's naive, childlike attitude to nature, his reputation among the people, and his view of the cultus, as marks of great antiquity (*Proph.* vol. i. p. 111). Also the simple, lofty, and classically finished language testifies to high antiquity. In point of form the book is one of the most perfect pieces of the Old Testament; and this perfection rests, not on technical diligence, but on genuine poetic elevation, which spontaneously communicates itself to the style. Prophecy and poetry are here inseparably blended.

The writing of Joel forms a beautifully rounded and articulated whole, the prophet having composed it at the close of this episode of his life. Mark the arrangement at the close. Only by overlooking this inner and outer unity could any one attempt to assign chs. iii. and iv. to a different author from chs. i., ii. (so M. Vernes). The integrity of the writing has not been seriously contested. The opinion of Hitzig and Ewald, that the oracle of Zion common to Isaiah and Micah (Isa. ii. 2 ff.; Micah iv. 1 ff.) may have originally belonged to a discourse of Joel lost to us (as antithesis to Joel

iv. 10 ff.), remains a conjecture. The writing of Joel has high theological importance because of its powerful delineation of the day of the Lord, which is preceded by the perfecting of the Church by the Divine Spirit. The way in which the prophet regards the connection between material nature and the human world, and in which he regards the government of God in both, with a view to the perfecting of His rule on earth, is sublime. The spiritual there takes a vivid form; the outward is animated by the Spirit of God, and used by Him to inflict judgment and manifest grace.

Of literature there remains still to be mentioned as special expositions of Joel: K. A. Credner, *Der Proph. Joel*, 1831. This exposition has deservedly exerted considerable influence, and is still always to be regarded on account of its rich material. A. Wünsche, *Die Weiss. des Proph. Joel*, 1872, in comparison with the same author's exposition of Hosea, shows material improvement in method. Ad. Merx, *Die Prophetie des Joel und ihre Ausleger*. 1879, chiefly treats the history of exposition, and furnishes in this respect the most comprehensive material. Scholz (Cath.), *Komm. zu Joel*, 1885. *Le Prophète Joel* . . . publié d'après les notes d'Eugène Le Savoureux par A. Baumgartner, Paris 1888.

[The difference in the numbering of chapters and verses in the German version, according to the Hebrew, should be noticed. The change is so slight that it does not seem necessary to add the English references.]

I. 1. The word of Yahveh, which came to Joel, the son of Pethuel. 2. Hear this, ye old men, and hearken, all ye

Chapter I.

Ver. 1. The heading as in Hosea, Micah, Zephaniah, but without statement of time. "Its simplicity testifies to its great antiquity, and no reason is apparent why it should not originate with the author of the oracle himself" (Hitzig). Ver. 2. The *old men* are addressed first, because, in distinction

inhabitants of the land! Has such a thing been done in your lifetimes, or in the lifetime of your fathers? 3. Tell it to your children, and *let* your children *tell* their children, and their children the generation following. 4. What the palmer-worm left the locust has eaten; and what the locust left the canker-worm has eaten; and what the canker-worm

from the common people (of Judæa), they are not only the most influential (which especially comes out in ver. 14), but also because their memory goes farthest back, and they can here bear witness that the like has never occurred. זאת applies, like עליה, ver. 3, to what is stated in ver. 4. Ver. 3. From the imperative ספרו a יְסַפְּרוּ is easily supplied to the following clauses. Ver. 4. The extraordinary feature consists in a fourfold *locust plague*, devastating everything, which is yet not future, but has already sharply gripped the land (against the allegorical interpretation see afterwards). Rightly Calvin: Putant aliqui denunciari pœnam in futurum tempus; sed contextus satis ostendit eos errare et corrumpere genuinum prophetæ sensum, potius etiam propheta hic objurgat duritiem populi quod plagas suas non sentiat. The prophet will disclose to the people the true meaning of this misfortune.—The four kinds of locusts, which followed in a brief time, are not entirely, perhaps not at all, different species, but partially, perhaps entirely, different stages of the same class of these insects, which are very destructive, even as newly-hatched larva, and then shed their skin four times before they are fully grown and are able to use their wings. The four names cannot be exactly defined (cf. ch. ii. 25); we translate them after Delitzsch. [Delitzsch: Säbler, Heupferd, Lecker, Schroter, which it is impossible to distinguish in English. In the uncertainty of all names, we have retained the English ones.] גזם (also in Amos iv. 9), according to the etymon (cf. Arab. *ǵazama*, Targ. גְּזַם, Syr.), one that saws off, is usually understood, after LXX. (*κάμπη*), of the first caterpillar stage; by Credner, on the other hand, of the first swarm of migrating locusts, whose brood are the three following.—ארבה, elsewhere general word for locusts, here used more specifically.—ילק (from לקק, Ibn Ezra) is similarly the name, according to LXX. (*βρούχος*), for an undeveloped form of the insect. According to Nah. iii. 16, it is the locust, whose wings are still together in a horny sheath, until they are unfolded. So, after Credner, most writers.—חסיל (LXX erroneously *ἐρυσίβη*, mildew), to be derived, after Deut. xxviii. 38, from

left the caterpillar has eaten! 5. Wake up, ye drunkards, and weep! And wail, all ye winebibbers, for the new wine, because it is destroyed from your mouth. 6. For a people has come up on my land, strong, and countless; its teeth lion's teeth, and it has the grinders of the lioness. 7. It has laid waste my vine, and broken in pieces my fig-tree; has peeled

חסל, to devour, like ארבה, used generally elsewhere. These four devastations are not to be apportioned to four years, against which view of the ancients Bochart rightly urges יתר; yet the first swarm may have come in autumn (Credner); ch. ii. 25 implies that the plague was repeated several, at least two, years. The locusts are hatched, as a rule, in spring (March), and develop up to June or July. See respecting these insects Bochart, *Hierozoicon;* Credner, App. to Comm.; Tristram, *Natural History of the Bible*, p. 306 ff.; Thomson, *The Land and the Book* (Index, under Joel); see the Dictionaries. Ver. 5. The carousers, who stupefy themselves with drink in order to forget the gravity of the times, are to awake (cf. Gen. ix. 24). If they know no higher feeling, at least the loss of the new wine should disturb them, as the next promising vintage, after which their mouth already watered, is lost. עסיס, the pressed grape-juice, sweet wine, must; whereas תירוש means the fermented wine, from ירש, to seize, namely, the senses, the head, in Hebrew thought the heart; cf. Hos. iv. 11. Ver. 6. That the locusts are represented as a hostile *nation* (cf. ch. ii. 2) is clear; and this has given rise to the misunderstanding that these insects are always here to be figuratively understood of enemies. See on this point afterwards. *My*, i.e. God's land (cf. ch. ii. 1), a plundering, hostile host has overrun; the description, however, at once falls back to the animal world; the dreadful weapon of these foes is their *teeth*. מתלעות, from the stem תלע. Ver. 7. The suffixes here also apply to God, the speaker, and not to the prophet. *Vine and fig-tree* stand here as the pride of the land, τὰ βασιλικώτατα (Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* iii. 10. 8); cf. Hos. ii. 14. *For devastation, to make desolation*, a poetically intensifying phrase, instead of devastating, desolating. The infin. abs. חשף intimates that the action is done round and round; the suff. in חשפה goes back to the vine, with which the fig-tree is only casually associated, and whose *tendrils* are afterwards spoken of.—והישליך, without object. The reference is to the rest of the covering of the trees, which it scorned to eat.—The tendrils become *white* in consequence of the green covering being peeled off. Cf. Tacitus, *Ann.* ix. 5: Ambedunt quidquid

it round and thrown down, its tendrils are made white. 8. Mourn like a virgin girded with sackcloth for the lord of her youth! 9. Meal-offering and drink-offering is destroyed from the house of Yahveh; the priests mourn, who should minister to Yahveh. 10. Wasted is the field, the earth mourns, because the wheat is wasted, the new wine dried up, the oil languishes. 11. Despair, ye husbandmen; mourn, ye vinedressers, for wheat and barley, because the harvest of the field is perished. 12. The vine is dried up, and the fig-tree withers, pomegranate-tree, even palm and apple-tree, all the trees of the field are dried up; for mirth is withered from the

herbidum est et frondosum. Ver. 8. אלה, to wail, here only (and Aram., Syr. אלא), instead of ילל, אלל. The population, the community, is addressed.—ה' יַשַּׁק, see Ezek. vii. 18. As בתולה means virgin in the strictest sense, the lord of her youth cannot be her still youthful husband, but her betrothed. So the most bitter grief of the maiden, who has never been led home by her husband. Ver. 9. כרת, Hoph. with מִן, like Niph. in ver. 5. The masc. for femin., Ges. § 147*a*. The ceasing of these offerings is certainly in prospect. The meat-offering consisted especially of fine meal (Lev. ii. 1), the drink-offering connected with it especially of wine. The priests, who minister at Yahveh's altar (מְשָׁרְתֵי ה'), are comfortless, not because their income is lost, but because they can no longer exercise their office. The interruption of the sacrificial service was to Israelitish feeling as if death had sundered the tenderest tie. This worship of God was a bond of love between heaven and earth. Ver. 10 gives the reason of the foregoing. In this poetically striking verse one should notice the rhythm of the brief, broken clauses, and the alliteration, etc., marking them. The ground and its fruits are depicted as animated, sentient beings.—הובישׁ (ἐξηράνθη, LXX), from יָבֵשׁ, to dry up, shows, what ver. 17 ff. confirms, that terrible drought and heat as usual went along with this locust-plague. Ver. 11. Here Joel, passing from nature to consciously suffering man, again uses הובישׁ as word-play; for here it is from בּוֹשׁ, which does not always mean our "to be ashamed," but to be startled, to lose self-command; so in this Hiphil form, whereas הֵבִישׁ is transitive. Ver. 12. As in ver. 10 the prophet transfers הובישׁ poetically to the joy itself, which in a sense is dried up from the children of men. Yet here also the prophet to a certain extent plays on the meaning of בּוֹשׁ.—

children of men. 13. Gird you and lament, ye priests! Wail, ye ministers of the altar! Come to spend the night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God, because meal-offering and drink-offering is withdrawn from the house of your God. 14. Sanctify a fast, call a general assembly! Gather the elders, all the inhabitants of the land, to the house of Yahveh your God, and cry to Yahveh! 15. Alas, the day! For the day of Yahveh is near, and like an overwhelming it comes from the Almighty. 16. Is not the food swept away before

אמללה, perf. Pulal of אמל.—The *pomegranate-tree* (*punica granatum*, L.) with juicy fruit is still a favourite fruit-tree in Palestine. The withering of the *date-palm* (the glory of the land still in Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xiii. 6, and Tacitus, *Hist.* v. 6) may be traced to another cause than mere heat and want of rain. It is the injury by locusts which causes the withering of these trees.—בִּי proves the cause by the effect (Del.). Ver. 13. The summons grows more definite and pointed. First the *priests*, then, in ver. 14, the people are exhorted to fervent prayer. חגר שׂק=חגר, according to the following words.—סִפְדוּ, elsewhere especially of mourning for the dead, cf. ver. 8; LXX, κόπτεσθε. —בֹּאוּ לִינוּ, to be joined closely together: prepare yourselves to continue day and night in penitent supplication.—אֱלֹהָי, the God whom I serve, and in whose name I speak. Cf. ver. 9. Ver. 14. As in chap. ii. 15 f., the priests, not the elders, are addressed.—קַדֵּשׁ, Piel, properly to set apart (from what is profane), hence to appoint a sacred day (Gen. ii. 3), ordain a feast. —The *old men* (accus., not vocat.) are here the elders, the venerable heads of the nation, cf. on ver. 2. זְעָקוּ, they are not merely to pray, call on God, but to cry to Him, impelled by affliction and sorrow. Vv. 15–20 is not uttered by the prophet as the spokesman of the penitent Church (so after older writers, Ewald, *et al.*); for a saying follows at once, which only the enlightened seer could utter. In ver. 19 f. the prophet first offers priestly intercession for the pining creation. Ver. 15. אֲהָהּ, exclamation of terror with לְ of the object; cf. the dependent passage, Ezek. xxx. 2.—כִּי explains what day is meant, namely, the "Day of Yahveh," which this terrible plague shows to be near at hand. The phrase יוֹם יְהוָה is not coined by Joel, but is here assumed as already known. See on Obad. 15, and cf. on ii. 1 f.—כְּשֹׁד, the so-called *caph veritatis*, properly, "in the character of an overwhelming." Isa. xiii. 6 also depends on this passage. Ver. 16 returns to the actual threatening sign

our eyes, joy and rejoicing from the house of God? 17. The seeds are shrivelled under their clods, the granaries are made desolate, the barns fall to ruin, for the wheat is withered. 18. How do the beasts groan, the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture; also the herds of sheep shall suffer punishment. 19. To thee, O Yahveh, I call; for fire has consumed the pastures of the plain, and flame burnt up every tree of the field. 20. Also the beasts of the field pant to thee, because the water-brooks

of the real judgment-day (נכרת, partic.); "the bases of the natural as well as of the religious life have disappeared" (Del.). Ver. 17. עָבַשׁ (here only) describes the shrivelling of the seed-grains (פרדות here only), when they have been deadened, *i.e.* robbed of their germinating power, by the heat under the clods (מ׳ here only).—The prophet, again combining the consequences with the present distress in his view, sees the store-houses laid waste, the barns, in which there is nothing to store, broken down (the opposite in Luke xii. 18).—ממגרות (here only), with double preformative prefixed and dagesh dirimens instead of מִגְרוֹת (Hag. ii. 19) from גור. On the other hand, Wünsche, Steiner, derive the former from מגר, to throw down: corn heaps.—הביש applies again in a double sense! is withered, and to put to shame. Ver. 18. The *animal world* also is heavily smitten.—Read נֶאֶנְחָה (Baer here).—בוּךְ, Niph., properly, to be bewildered, describing the anxious running to and fro of animals, hungry and thirsty, unable to find grass and water. The more easily satisfied *sheep* also suffer. נאשם (Niph. here only), to suffer hurt in consequence of sin. For beasts also suffer, especially in such general calamities, through the sin of man (cf. Rom. viii. 19–22). Ver. 19. In view of this general suffering the prophet involuntarily breaks out into supplication, making himself the spokesman of the irrational creation. Everything is consumed by the fierce heat. מדבר, not desert in the strict sense (in chap. ii. 3 different), but uncultivated land, steppe, hence specially suited for pasture ground. Ver. 20. The ב׳ ישדה, which by their violent panting join in the piteous cry for mercy, in distinction from those named in ver. 18, are the *wild* beasts in wood and field. Akin to this verse is Ps. xlii. 1, where also the *water-brooks* are mentioned, which in the present passage are described as altogether dried up, whereas at other times a number of them continued to flow through the summer. The description concludes with an emphatic repetition.

are dried up, and fire has consumed the pastures of the plain.

II. 1. Blow ye the horn on Zion, and sound an alarm on my holy mount! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble; for the day of Yahveh is come, for it is near! 2. A day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and black night! A people spread like dawn on the mountains, great and strong; there has never been its like, and none shall come after it to the years of distant generations. 3. Before

Chapter II.

Ver. 1. The alarm-cry (as in Hos. v. 8) applies this time, not to a human foe, nor merely to the advancing swarm of locusts, although at this also the people were perhaps called up, but to "the day of Yahveh is come" (ch. i. 15). The second כִּי guards against the supposition that that day had already begun: the meaning of בָּא (perf., not partic.), namely, is that it has come near. *This* danger is fittingly made known to the land from the centre of the divine government, where the seer stands on the watch-tower. Ver. 2 is to be divided as above, with Hitz., Del., in opposition to Massoretes. Of that day it is first said, it is a day of darkness. Of this also, the obscurity caused by an approaching swarm of locusts has given a dismal prelude; cf. Ex. x. 15. The clauses are loosely joined together. First the seer beholds the horrible darkness in the form of clouds emerging on the horizon; then a strange brightening. There lies *spread on the mountains* something *like dawn*, which presents itself as *a people*. The comparison of the swarm to the first glimmering light rests partly on this, that both are first visible on the horizon or on the mountains bounding it; partly on this, that these swarms are really indicated in the heavens by a bright stripe made by the reflection of the sun's rays from the insects' wings.—כמהו, *i.e.* as numerous and strong as this there has been and will be none. יוסף (shortened imperf., according to Steiner arising out of the ser. def. יוֹסֵף?), *sc.* לִהְיוֹת. Cf. as to the severity of the plague, ch. i. 2 f., 6, and the quite similar expressions in the Egyptian locust-plague, Ex. x. 14. Of course the expressions are not to be minutely pressed. Ver. 3. Properly, before it fire devours. The *effect* of the devastating march is quite that of *fire*; like devouring, crackling flame, it destroys everything where it comes, and turns a paradise in a moment into a

it consuming fire, and behind it burning flame! Like the garden of Eden is the land before it, and behind it barren waste; nor does it let any remnant escape. 4. Like the appearance of horses is its appearance, and like war-steeds so they run. 5. Rattling like chariots they leap on the tops of the mountains, crackling like fire-flame, consuming stubble—like a mighty people arrayed for battle! 6. Before it the peoples quake, all faces change colour. 7. They run like mighty men, like men of war they mount the wall; and they

wilderness (see Ezek. xxxvi. 35). Nothing escapes it (the "people") גַּם־לֹא, *ne—quidem*. Ver. 4. On the nearer approach of the dreaded army-columns one perceives the singular shape of these warriors. The likeness of the locusts to *horses*, more precisely to bridled and caparisoned war-steeds (פרשים), is obvious; they resemble these in shape and movement. This comparison leads to the figure in ver. 5. Ver. 5. The noise of the locusts is compared to the rattling of chariots and the rustling of flame. The accents rightly connect על ראשי ה׳ closely with ירקדון, as this definition of place suits only the locusts, not the chariots driving in the plain.—קול stands elastically before any sound or noise. ירקד׳—כול, properly, "they leap in likeness of the noise," *i.e.* with noise like that of chariots. The third clause, כעם ע׳, has the appearance, not the noise, as the point of comparison, hence without קול. They look like a numerous warlike nation (here עם, not גוי, as in ch. i. 6!), set in array for attack. ערוך, stat. constr. with chateph-seghol, which the gutturals, elsewhere א especially, love. Ver. 6. To this corresponds the moral impression made by this army: Every one *trembles* (חיל, Kal) and *grows pale. All faces withdraw* their ruddy freshness (פארור, as in the dependent passage, Nah. ii. 11, properly the pretty colour; LXX, Luth. confound with פרור, pot). Ver. 7. The assault follows, which they carry out with equal courage and masterly order, overcoming all hindrances. Especially wonderful is the way in which they keep their path, *i.e.* advance in straight line, without crossing their neighbour's path. This trait also is quite true to nature, the locusts in creeping and flight preserving this uniformity of direction, on which account Jerome on this chapter compares them to lines of mosaic work: Tanto ordine ex dispositione jubentis Dei volitant, ut instar tesserularum, quæ in pavimentis artificis finguntur manu, suum locum teneant et ne puncto quidem et, ut ita dicum, ungue transverso declinent

march every one in his ways, and confuse not their paths. 8. And none thrusts his fellow, they march one by one in his own path; and they fall behind the weapons, they are not wounded! 9. They rush about in the city, they run on the wall; they mount into the houses, they penetrate through the windows like a thief! 10. The earth quakes before it;

ad alteram. Ver. 8. ובעד, *they fall behind the* (outstretched) *weapons*, thus coming to the back of the attacking phalanx (cf. ver. 9).—*Without being wounded.* So still the best rendering of בצע after Abulwal., R. Tanchum, Kimchi, from the root meaning = to cut, here intransitive. Men advanced with weapons of all sorts to strike and throw, such as peasants possess, in order to arrest their march, as in later and again in modern times real armies have been used against them (Liv. *Hist.* xlii. 10; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xi. 29; Hasselquist, *Reise nach Palüst.* p. 255); but against such swarms all in vain. Of course not all, but most of these insects came to the earth (יפלו), after passing unscathed the line bristling with weapons (שלח, both missiles and outstretched weapons), and then advanced further without check. Ver. 9. They now even storm the city (Jerusalem), as the verse describes, ascending in abrupt clauses to the end.—שקק, root—meaning to drive, especially to impel to run; here already in Kal to run hither and thither in hurry and bustle. בעד, see ver. 8. The windows are merely latticed, so that they are able to penetrate. Jerome: Nihil locustis invium est, quum et agros et sata et arbores et urbes et domos et cubiculorum secreta penetrant. Although they cannot do as much damage in houses as in the field, still the disgusting insects are there all the more annoying to men. Cf. also Theodoret on ver. 8: "One can see how the locust, after the manner of warriors, mounts walls and marches in roads, and cannot be dispersed even by obstacles, but carries out the attack as with a common rush;" and on ver. 9: "And this we have often seen, not only in foes, but also in locusts. For not only flying but also creeping up the walls, they penetrate into dwellings by the light-holes." Ver. 10. Although the vast swarm really darkens sun, moon, and stars, still the seer goes in his description beyond the limit of the natural phenomenon, because he sees in it a vast system of moral causation, which presents it to him far more powerfully as a prelude of God's judgment-day. Hence all the stars lose their brightness, and one hears (ver. 11) the thunder-voice of Yahveh, which could scarcely be

the heavens shake; sun and moon grow black, and the stars withdraw their shining. 11. And Yahveh makes his voice sound before his army; for his camp is exceeding great, yea strong is the performer of his word. For great is the day of Yahveh and greatly to be feared, and who can endure it? 12. But even now, is Yahveh's oracle, turn again to me with all your heart, and with fasting and weeping and wailing! 13. And rend your hearts, not your garments, and turn again to Yahveh your God! For he is gracious and merciful, slow to wrath and rich in goodness, and repents him of the

heard in reality, because a mere buzzing accompanies the swarm, and a storm only too far off. Ver. 11. *Who can abide it?* Answer: *None* can stand on that day (cf. Mal. iii. 2), therefore let (ver. 12 f.) all pray that God may yet turn with His judgment (ver. 14). Ver. 12. *Even now still*, at so advanced an hour, when the grievous end is already approaching, God calls to turn and repent, thus leaving the door of salvation still open.—שבו עד as in Hos. xiv. 2.—The following *with your whole heart* still more emphasises the necessity of thorough, unreserved repentance, which must be profoundly inward, while also expressing itself outwardly. Ver. 13. But the prophet at once returns to inwardness, that there may be no mere surface-work. All turns, not on *rending the garments*, such as was a sign of deepest grief, also of penitent grief, but on rending the hearts. *i.e.* true contrition. They should be moved to such repentance by the thought that God, according to the old Torah-word, is *gracious*, etc., taken from Ex. xxxiv. 6, where God would reveal His holy nature.—*Slow of wrath*, μακρόθυμος (opposite קְצַר אַ׳). In these combinations the dual (applying to the nostrils) stands in the meaning of wrath, and so the member for the feeling, the organ by which it is expressed. The positive element, "rich in goodness," stands in opposition to the negative implied in "slow of wrath." God is sparing in anger, generous in grace. In keeping with the situation, the prophet adds to the Torah-word: *and one who repents of the evil* (נחם, partic., despite the Massoretic note), who therefore, when the manifestation of anger has already begun, revokes it, and makes good the hurt. The anthropopathy lying in these divine predicates here reaches a climax. Cf. in general, p. 59. That God repents, suffers Himself to be grieved, appears also in Gen. vi. 6 f. and often. Sudden turns in history show, in a sense, a counter-command of God, which seems to point to

evil. 14. Who knows, whether he may turn and repent and leave a blessing behind him; meal-offering and drink-offering for Yahveh your God. 15. Blow the horn on Zion, sanctify a fast, call a general assembly! 16. Gather the people, sanctify the multitude, assemble the old men, gather together the children and the sucklings on the mothers' breast! Let the bridegroom go forth from his chamber and the bride from her room! 17. Let the priests, the ministers of Yahveh, weep between the forecourt and the altar, and let them say: "Have pity, O Yahveh, on thy people, and give not thy inheritance up to reproach, that the heathen should mock them; why should they say among the peoples: Where now is their God?"

18. Then was Yahveh jealous for his land and spared

different streams of volition in Him. Opposite decisions of God are just those which are made only conditionally, and do not express His absolute will, which as such is unchangeable; for the correction of an idea unworthy of His dignity, see Num. xxiii. 19; 1 Sam. xv. 29. Ver. 14. *Who knows?* (2 Sam. xii. 22) corresponds to אולי, Amos v. 15.—ונחם, here perf.—Cf. the dependent passage, Jonah iii. 9. *A blessing*, concrete in meaning, as often: a return abundant beyond expectation, due to His rich grace, and therefore to be used in the first instance to His honour. Ver. 15. The blowing of the horns here calls to the temple, like our church bells; in ch. ii. 1 it corresponded to our alarm bells. Cf. ch. i. 14. Ver. 16. קדש, Piel, here with object of the assembling (2 Kings x. 20), which is to be inaugurated by certain ceremonies.—Even the children, down to the least who are carried by their mothers, are to be included, as the whole nation lies under guilt, and God may perhaps be best moved by their prattle; cf. Ps. viii. 2. *Bridegroom* and *bride* are to leave their enjoyment and join the mourners. חֻפָּה, not a bridal canopy, such as was in use later, but the bridal chamber, the innermost part of the חֶדֶר. Ordinarily great care was taken not to disturb the first love; cf. Deut. xxiv. 5. Ver. 17. *Between forecourt and altar*, see Ezek. viii. 16.—משל ב, elsewhere always: to rule over, which here also is not impossible, as by the failure of the harvest the nation became dependent on its neighbours, Amos vii. 2. Still the immediate context (cf. Jer. xxiv. 9) suggests for משל here the meaning "to use as a derisive proverb." So Merx, Steiner, *et al.* Ver. 18 relates historically the effect

his people; 19. and Yahveh answered and said to his people:

Behold, I will send you the wheat and the new wine and the oil, and you shall be satisfied therewith; and I will no more make you a reproach among the heathen. 20. And him of the north I will chase away from you, and drive him to a land of drought and barrenness, his forepart to the front sea and his tail to the hinder sea, that his stench may go up; and his ill savour shall rise, because he did such great things.

of the pilgrimage of repentance and prayer. Against Merx, who reads וַיְקַנֵּא, juss., see Steiner. קנא, Piel, with לְ, to be jealous for one, is used where love, having been made jealous by misrepresentation or ill-treatment of its favourite on the part of a third person, undergoes a strong reaction against the latter in favour of the former. Ver. 19 ff. to ver. 25 shows how God repents of the evil (ver. 13), and makes good the hurt. הִנְנִי שֹלֵחַ, fut. instans: I have resolved to send to you, properly to release the wheat hitherto kept back.—חֶרְפָּה, here concrete object of reproach. Ver. 20. The *northener*. This designation of the swarm is strange, as the locusts usually come from the south or south-east to Palestine, and have their home there. But the swarm in question may have come from the north, and there are analogies for this. Hitzig, on the other hand: *τυφωνικός*; Ewald similarly, "the Typhonian." —The allegorists, who rely chiefly on this word, suggest a northern people, like Assyria. But in this passage also the reference to the physical plague is unmistakeable. The troublesome northener God removes, so that his front is to the eastern (Dead) sea, his rear to the western (Mediterranean) sea, and there he perishes. This only suits such a swarm, which is cast by a north wind, which quickens its march into the Idumæan desert, where it finds nothing to feed on, while portions of the line perish in the waters named. Often when the wind, which has carried them, fails, deserts and sea become their grave. So Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xi. 59: Gregatim sublato vento in maria aut stagna decidunt. Jerome, *ad hoc loc.:* Etiam nostris temporibus vidimus agmina locustarum texisse Judæam, quæ postea vento surgenti in mare primum et novissimum (mortuum et mediterraneum) præcipitata sunt. Quumque littora utriusque maris acervis mortuarum locustarum, quas aquæ evomuerant, implerentur, putredo earum et fœtor in tantum noxius fuit, ut ærem quoque corrumperet

21. Fear not, O land, rejoice and be glad, for Yahveh does great things. 22. Fear not, ye beasts of the field; for the pastures of the plain grow green, for the tree bears its fruit, fig-tree and vine yield their strength. 23. And ye, children of Zion, rejoice and be glad in Yahveh your God! For he has given you an instructor in righteousness, and so he causes to come down upon you the early rain, and the latter rain in the first (month). 24. And the threshing-floors are

et pestilentia tam jumentorum quam hominum gigneretur.—צחנה, stench of filth or corruption, here only.—הגדיל ל׳, properly belongs only to God (ver. 21); it is arrogance in the locust to make such high pretensions, hence the merited punishment. Here also the irrational creation is imaginatively described. The Lord knows how to put an end to all boasting. Ver. 21. The exhortations to rejoice stand in broad contrast with what has preceded. Repentance has made such a revolution possible, divine grace has made it actual. The great deeds of God are encouraging to His land and people; cf. Ps. cxxvi. 2 f. The perfects here and in ver. 22 are prophetic. Ver. 22. Opposite of ch. i. 18–20. חיל, properly power, full strength: here, what they are able to yield. Ver. 23. *Rejoice in Yahveh*, so that the ground of your joy lies in Him, which the following כִּי explains.—המורה ל׳ wrongly translated "the early rain in right measure" by Ibn Esra, Kimchi, Ewald, Hitzig, Steiner, Wünsche, Schultz, *et al.* Rather "the teacher," better, "*instructor in righteousness*" is meant (rightly Jonath., Vulg., Rashi, Hengst., Delitzsch, Keil, Merx, *et al.*). The key to the passage lies in 1 Kings viii. 36, 2 Chron. vi. 27, according to which the answer to prayer for rain must be preceded by divine instruction (תורה) respecting the good way. In the present case God has vouchsafed such a teacher, who directs to the way which God approves (צדקה), so that He can now send also the גשם כורה (word-play, but guarded against misunderstanding by the earlier word). This instructor, therefore, is not the Messiah (Abrabanel, *et al.*), or a future teacher (Merx), but the prophet who has summoned to repentance.—The *early rain*, falling October to November, important for the sowing; the *latter rain in the first*, namely month, Nisan (March to April). Chald., Hitz., Wünsche, Delitzsch rightly so understood בראשון. Ewald, Hengst. differently: "at first," which would be opposed to "afterwards," ch. iii. 1. Merx prefers כבראשון: "as before" (?). Ver. 24.

full of grain, and the vats overflow with new wine and oil. 25. And I will restore you the years which the locust devoured, the canker-worm and the caterpillar and the palmer-worm, my great army, which I sent upon you. 26. And you shall eat to the full and be satisfied, and praise the name of Yahveh your God, who has dealt wondrously with you; and my people shall never be put to shame. 27. And you shall know that I dwell in the midst of Israel, and I am Yahveh your God, and none else; and my people shall never be put to shame.

III. 1. And it shall come to pass after these things that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream

Opposite of ch. i. 17.—The *vat* (יקב) is the vessel beneath the wine-press (גַּת) into which the juice runs from the latter. The grapes being so rich, the vats overflow.—שוק, Hiphil, properly to drive (cf. שקק, ch. ii. 9), press, namely over the edge. Ver. 25. The plague might destroy the work and fruit of many years in a few weeks; yet the phrase used here seems certainly to require that the coming of the four kinds, which are not put in exact chronological order, and hence in a different order from ch. i. 4, extended at least over two years. Ver. 26. The inf. abss. express the abundance of the action. This enjoyment must, of course, if it is to be blessed, be joined with praise of the giver, properly here of the doer. Ver. 27. The finest fruit of the good fortune to Israel will be the knowledge of its source, God's gracious presence amid the Church; cf. ch. iv. 17. This leads on to the spiritual gifts, ch. iii.

Chapter III.

Ver. 1. *After this*, i.e. this time of undisturbed enjoyment of God's natural gifts, a higher gift is dispensed. A long time will Judah enjoy this natural good before the gift of the Spirit comes, which introduces a general crisis affecting this land also. —*Pour out*, an expression chosen after the analogy of the rain, ch. ii. 23, affirms a hitherto unheard-of degree in bestowing the Spirit, who is poured out on all. Afterwards, this is spoken of in Isa. xxxii. 15; Zech. xii. 10; Isa. xliv. 3, and N. T.—*My Spirit*, here not the general vital force dwelling in man, but the supernatural one, which speaks in the prophets

dreams, your young men see visions. 2. And also upon the servants and upon the maids in those days I will pour out my Spirit. 3. And I will show wondrous signs in the heaven and on the earth: blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. 4. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the coming of the day of Yahveh, the great and terrible (day). 5. And it shall come to pass,

(Orelli, *O. T. Prophecy*, p. 4), as the effect mentioned shows.—*All flesh*, meant to indicate the greatest conceivable extent of the body receiving (whoever is flesh, man in the lowest sense), but in the nature of the case not (as in Lev. xvii. 14) to be extended to animals (Credner), who have no organ for *this* Spirit. According to the context, the prophet has not entire humanity in view, which is often so called (Gen. vi. 12 f.), but is thinking (as in ch. i. 2, etc.) primarily only of the inhabitants of the land, the members of God's people, but of these in their entirety, as the following expansion of the idea shows: your sons, etc. The range of כל בישר, Jer. xii. 12, Ezek. xxi. 4, 9, is to be similarly defined. Thanks to the universal reception of the Spirit, all the members of the nation are active as organs of revelation, without distinction of sex (sons and daughters), age (old and young), station (ver. 2). But the form in which they receive the revelation is different. Prophetic *dreams* (Herzog, xv. 733 f.) are ascribed to slumber-loving age, *visions* to youth, with its eager receptiveness to them. Ver. 3. In those days, when the whole Church prophesies, all nature also preaches the nearness of the last judgment. God exhibits threatening phenomena, such as have just happened, as presages. נתן מ׳, *porrigere miracula*, as in Ex. vii. 9. These astounding phenomena will involuntarily remind of the terrors of the judgment; heaven and earth will be fiery and blood-red, as well as darkened by *pillars of smoke* (write after Massoretes, ותימרות with י of ימר = אמר, to tower high). Without exact definition, the words suggest disturbing phenomena, like darkenings of sun and moon (ver. 4), fiery redness in the heaven, discolouring of the water (Ex. vii. 17), and the like, in which the childlike spirit hears God's warning voice; cf. Matt. xxiv. 29; Rev. vi. 12 f. Ver. 4. *In view of the coming of the day of Yahveh.* These portents, therefore, like the locust-army above, presage the coming of that day, ch. i. 15, ii. 11, which has been once turned aside by the people's repentance, but at last must come on the world. Ver. 5. In this universal crisis, nothing but feeling to *Yahveh* saves, but

whosoever calls on the name of Yahveh shall escape. For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be a multitude escaped, as Yahveh said, and among the surviving, whom Yahveh shall call.

IV. 1. For behold, in those days and at that time, when I bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, 2. I will gather together all nations, and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat, and there hold judgment upon them for my people and my inheritance, Israel, which they have

this does so unconditionally. קרא בשם ה׳, since Gen. iv. 26 expresses also acknowledgment of Yahveh, but especially xii. 8, xiii. 4, etc.—נמלט, properly to slip away; LXX, σωθήσεται. Here is the germ of the N. T. idea of σωτηρία (so LXX for פליטה, Obad. 17), which, in the first instance, is preservation from the judgment; then, no doubt, positively like תְּשׁוּעָה, fulness of salvation.—On the *Zion-mount*, as Yahveh's seat there shall be פליטה, which is not, in local sense, "asylum," but in personal: synonymous with שארית (Isa. xxxvii. 32), properly body of escaped ones, saved community.—כאשר א׳ ה׳ plainly points to a citation, and indeed not to Shemaiah's oracle, 2 Chron. xii. 7, but Obad. 17. But the פליטה extends, not merely to those dwelling on Zion, but also to the *survivors, whom Yahveh calls.* Exiles might be meant, but there is no reason why the prophet, who has already incorporated the slaves, although mostly non-Israelites, in the Church in the highest sense, and at the beginning of the verse advances a quite universal, spiritual criterion, should not have thought of *heathen.* That this is, in fact, the right view, is shown by the expression בשרידים in connection with ch. iv. 1 ff. Only scattered survivors of the heathen world are present, because (כי, iv. 1) the bulk of it, according to ch. iv., succumbs to the judgment. Observe the twofold קרא; calling on God and God's calling are conditions of salvation, the former more for the Jews who already know Him, the latter appearing more among the heathen.

Chapter IV.

Ver. 1. שוב שׁ׳ in Hos. vi. 11. That last age must bring also the deliverance of the captive Judæans (see Intr.), and this is introduced by a sanguinary judgment of the nations in the Holy Land. Ver. 2. For an explanation of the thought, cf.

scattered among the heathen, and have divided my land. 3. And on my people they have cast lots, and given a boy for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, and caroused! 4. And what have you also against me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all ye regions of Philistia? Will you perchance recompense me aught for what is done (to you)? Or will you do aught to me? Quickly, swiftly, I will return your doing on your own head. 5. That you have taken away my silver and my gold, and carried my choice jewels to your temples; 6. and

Micah iv. 11 f.—*Valley of Jehoshaphat*, scarcely a mere symbolic designation of the judgment-valley, formed by the prophet (Credner, Winer, *et al.*). Ibn Esra and modern writers suggest the valley where Jehoshaphat (about fifty years before), almost without striking a blow, had won a victory over the allied power of the heathen tribes (2 Chron. xx. 16 ff.). But that valley is called עֵמֶק בְּרָכָה, valley of praise (cf. the present ruin, Bereikût, west of Tekoa, east of the road to Hebron), and lies, perhaps, too far from Jerusalem to be the scene of the judgment here depicted. We conjecture that a valley or a plain south of Jerusalem was so called in remembrance of the memorable King Jehoshaphat, and in connection with his campaign of that time to the south. Afterwards, tradition describes the Kidron valley as the valley of Jehoshaphat, and the general judgment was expected there. This tradition, however, is only traceable from the time of Eusebius.—The name of the valley states what will take place here: *Yahveh will judge;* Niph. to come to a mutual understanding judicially, to contend. *Scattering of the people and partition of the land* (see Intr.). Ver. 3. Cf. Obad. 11. The victors carried on cruel slave-dealing with the members of God's people, casting lots on them and then exchanging them, so that they gave a free-born *boy* for a harlot and a *girl* for wine, thus handing them over to slavery for a nominal price to indulge their lust or intemperance. Ver. 4. *What you to me?* i.e. What have you against me? What do you see to attack in me or my people? *Tyre and Sidon*, the cities of wholesale trade (even with men, Ezek. xxvii. 13), and the *Philistines* carried on this trade with the captured Judæans. See the five districts of the latter, Josh. xiii. 3. Will they direct any act of recompense, revenge, or of provocation against Yahveh? In either case retribution will speedily overtake them.—הֲגְמוּל with interrog. הֲ. Ver. 5. Of stealing the temple vessels and jewels. Ver. 6. The *sons of Javan*, see Ezek.

the sons of Judah and the sons of Jerusalem you have sold to the sons of Javan, to carry them far away from their own land. 7. Behold, I will stir them up in the place whither you sold them, and will return your doing on your own head; 8. and sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the sons of Judah, and they shall sell them to the Sabæans, to a people far off; for Yahveh has said it. 9. Proclaim ye this among the heathen peoples: Sanctify a war! Wake up the mighty men! Let all the men of war draw near and come up! 10. Forge your ploughshares into swords and your pruning-hooks into spears! Let the weakling say, I am a mighty man! 11. Hasten and come, all ye heathen

xxvii. 13 and Obad. 20.—*To remove them far away*, which was the more wanton in view of the attachment of the Israelite to his own land and temple, to which his worship was bound (cf. 1 Sam. xxvi. 19). Ver. 7. Those sold return and become instruments of retribution on those who traded in them, *i.e.* Phœnicians and Philistines. Ver. 8. The retribution: their children are delivered by God to the Judæans (מכר, as in Judg. ii. 14 and often), and by them sold to the trading people of the south (שבא, in Ezek. xxvii. 22), who carry them away to a distant unknown people there. Ver. 9 ff. Execution of ver. 2. Not the defensive strength of Judah is summoned, but the entire heathen world. זאת applies to the following summons. —*Sanctify a war;* the opening of a war, among the heathen also, was associated with religious consecration, offerings, auspices. Really, it is the Lord who kindles the war spirit, according to ver. 2. Ver. 10. Not merely the warriors, the peaceful country people also are to present themselves, transforming the implements of tillage into weapons of war.—אִתִּים or אֵתִים, from אֵת, according to the old versions = ploughshare. As in 1 Sam. xxx. 20 f., מחרשה is distinguished therefrom, many prefer the meaning hoe, mattock (so Symm. already).—חַלָּשׁ (here only), opposite of גִּבּוֹר, from הָלַשׁ, to be limp, weakly. Cf. Schiller: "But war brings force to light, it raises all above the common, even in the coward it begets courage." Ver. 11. עוּשׁ (here only) = חוּשׁ (Ges.): *festinate et venite = festinato venite.* Others: come to help (after the Arabic). LXX, Syr.: assemble yourselves, which would anticipate ונקבצו. The latter not imperat., but perf., into which the summons passes.—*Thither*, namely, where the foes are crowded together. This prayer

peoples round about, and gather yourselves together;—thither, O Yahveh, bring down thy heroes! 12. Let all the heathen bestir themselves and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat, for there will I sit to judge all nations round about. 13. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe! Come, tread! For the wine-press is full, the vats overflow, for their wickedness is great. 14. Crowds upon crowds in the threshing-wain valley, for the day of Yahveh is near in the threshing-wain valley! 15. Sun and moon grow black, and the stars withdraw their shining. 16. And Yahveh roars from Zion, and from Jerusalem he makes his voice sound, so that heaven and earth tremble. But Yahveh is a refuge to his people

recalls Judg. v. 13 (23); yet the reference is not, as there, to human combatants, but to heavenly powers, as הנחת and the suff. in גבוריך (Ps. ciii. 20) intimate. So also Hitz., Del., Keil, Oehler, *et al.* On the other hand, Ewald, Wünsche, Schmoller refer it to the Judæans, said to be summoned in ver. 9. For this Judg. v. 13 and Micah iv. 13 may be appealed to, but the parallels are not decisive. Ver. 12. עלה as in Hos. ii. 2. The judge is enthroned in calm majesty; at His feet, without knowing it, the madly excited crowd is assembled. *Valley of Jehoshaphat*, on ver. 2. Ver. 13. The summons goes forth to God's heroes to discharge their judicial office. Harvest and wine-press treading are here first used as a terribly beautiful image of the deadly judgment; then often Isa. lxiii. 1 ff.; Rev. xiv. 15 (dependent passage). What at last is fully ripe is their wickedness, sin, which has reached its highest measure in quantity and quality. *Wine-press* and *vats*, cf. on ch. ii. 24. Ver. 14. *Crowds on crowds.* The word expresses properly the confused noise of such a mass of people, then the mass itself; the repetition, its immeasurableness.—חרוץ, usually explained as "something cut off," in the sense of *decretum, fatum*, penalty, decision (noun, Isa. x. 22). More probable, however, after the figure of the harvest, is the thought of the threshing-wain, Isa. xxviii. 27; Amos i. 3 = מורג ה'. So Calvin already. Ver. 15. The darkening which, according to ch. ii. 10, took place already in the prelude to the judgment, now first begins in earnest in the main act. Ver. 16. Just so, the thunder and the earthquake, cf. ch. ii. 11. The prophet does not really describe the event, because seeing it would do no good, but covers it with night and horror, and shows us at once God's

and a stronghold to the children of Israel. 17. And you shall know that I am Yahveh your God, who dwell on Zion, my holy mountain; and Jerusalem shall be a sanctuary, and strangers shall no more pass through her. 18. And it shall be on that day, the mountains shall drop down with new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the brooks of Judah shall flow with water; and a spring shall go forth from the house of Yahveh to water the acacia dale. 19. Egypt shall become a desolation, and Edom a barren waste, for the outrage to Judah's sons, in that they shed innocent blood in their land. 20. But Judah shall abide for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation; 21. and I

people well protected against the storm. Ver. 17. The experience of God's true nature and holy rule is here renewed and heightened in relation to ch. ii. 27.—קדש, properly, place set apart for God. Here the meaning is: It shall be such an one in deed and truth, unassailable by the nations, so that no foreign nation dares again to tread the city with marauding intent; just so, Obad. 17. Ver. 18. Glance into the promised land of Judah, now most richly endowed with God's blessing, where milk and wine, according to poetical hyperbole, flow in streams, Gen. xlix. 11. (Verbs of abundance with accus. Ges. § 138, Anm. 2.) But Judah's poverty in water will pass into the opposite, when all its numerous wadis obtain water, and in particular a *spring issuing from Yahveh's house waters the acacia valley.* The valley meant is not the one in Num. xxv. 1 ff., which was beyond the Jordan (!), but, according to the starting-point of the spring, and the further exposition, Ezek. xlvii. 1 ff., a valley in connection with the Kidron valley, perhaps a part of the present Wadi-en-Nâr. Acacias still thrive, even on arid ground. Ver. 19. The lands of the foe, on the contrary, are punished with barrenness. This is affirmed of *Egypt*, so well watered by nature and art, whose king, Shishak, plundered the temple and palace at Jerusalem under Rehoboam (1 Kings xiv. 25), and of *Edom*, which must recently have shown itself hostile (see Intr.), and to which especially the charge applies; *on account of the outrage to* the sons of Judah (genit. obj. with allusion to Obad. 10), which outrage is perpetrated by slaughtering the Jews settled in its land. Ver. 21*a*. Of doubtful meaning. Instead of the first ונקיתי, Ges. *et al.* would read וְנִקַּמְתִּי, after LXX, ἐκζητήσω: "I will avenge and not leave unpunished;" but in this case the

will regard their blood as cleansed, which I did not so regard, —but Yahveh dwells on Zion.

Exposition.

Contents of Joel's Writing. The Day of Yahveh. 1. First Warning-cry on occasion of a Locust-plague, ch. i. 2–20; 2. Second Warning-cry on like occasion, ch. ii. 1–17; 3. Comforting Promise, ch. ii. 18–27; Completion of the Community of Yahveh and of the General Judgment, chs. iii., iv.: *a.* Gift of the Spirit, ch. iii. 1 f.; *b.* Signs of the Final Judgment, iii. 3–5; *c.* Judgment of the Nations in the valley of Jehoshaphat, ch. iv. 1–16; *d.* Judah saved, ch. iv. 16–21.

An unparalleled locust-devastation, combined with ruinous drought, was the outward occasion for the public appearance of Joel, who from a higher point of view explains this "natural event" by its deeper connection with God's revelation in the world. It is true, attempts have been made in all ages to interpret the plague described in his discourses allegorically, as if the reference everywhere were, not to locusts, but to hostile armies which were to invade Judah. So already Targ. Jonathan, and most of the Church Fathers, who refer the four species, ch. i. 4, ii. 25, to four empires or

second must have run: וְלֹא אֲנַקֶּה.—Merx: "I declare their blood a נקי, pure, which I before did not esteem נקי;" after Jonah i. 14, Deut. xxi. 8, Jer. xxv. 29, it is said to be = I let it not be shed with impunity, declare it inviolable.—We prefer by דמם to understand the blood lying on Judah, the blood-guiltiness attaching to it a long time (cf. Num. xxv. 27; Deut. xxi. 8), which hitherto has found no expiation. The association of נקה with a material, instead of a personal, object is unusual; the guilt is purged away, the guilty one cleansed. Zech. xiii. 1 connects this feature with the above temple-spring, ch. iv. 18. —ויהוה, not an appended oath (Ewald), but concluding feature, alluding again emphatically to the chief point (cf. Obad. 21), which was already mentioned in ver. 17, but recurs here like a refrain in Joel's manner.

heathen rulers tyrannising over Judah, though certainly they do not agree in specifying them. Yet Jerome and Theodoret, who were struck by the natural truth of Joel's description, at least desire to attain the natural sense alongside the political one. The same meaning found defenders in the Middle Ages in Ibn Esra, Rashi, D. Kimchi; in the Reformation age it was approved by Luther and Calvin. Later, S. Bochart especially (in *Hierozoicon*) secured it predominance by showing the exact agreement with natural history. He is rightly followed by most modern writers. Yet exceptions are not wanting. Thus, *e.g.*, Hengstenberg, Hävernick, Hilgenfeld, Merx, have returned to the symbolical or allegorical interpretation.

Without doubt, the entire description in Joel i. and ii. is pervaded by a prophetic symbolism. But this does not consist in foreign armies, whose coming belongs to the future, being compared to locusts, but conversely in this, that the animals, which are only too truly a present reality, are depicted as a terrible invading army. We cannot more thoroughly mistake the exceedingly natural description in ch. ii. 2–9 (Rev. ix. 3 ff. quite different!), which is also highly poetical, and more completely rob it of its graphic power, than by such an artificial importing of a political sense. But we have more than poetry here. That warlike picture of the locusts has its inner reasons and deeper right in the fact that they are in truth Yahveh's army. The prophet would represent them as such. Therefore he is filled, not merely with grief for the lost harvest, but also with terror at the worse evils to follow (ch. i. 15, ii. 1 ff.). A sign so terrible as this devastation announces, that the *Day of Yahveh* itself is approaching, when He will reckon with the world and with His people. Whoever thinks this occasion too trifling to be brought into connection with the general judgment, does not reflect that for Orientals such a plague of locusts is among the most fearful visitations, and destroys the land more completely than the passage of a hostile army.

Starting from this occasion of an actual devastation, the Book of Joel then unfolds, with steady advance of ideas and in beautifully finished form, God's thoughts of the future. In the first discourse, ch. i., the predominant feeling is sorrow at the withdrawal of natural blessings by the terribly obstinate and prolonged national calamity. The whole population is summoned to pray and cry aloud in anguish before God,—from the vulgar carousers, whose enjoyment is taken from them, advancing to the peasants, who have been robbed of the fruit of their toil, and at last reaching the priests, who must have felt it deeply, that even the sacrificial service had to be interrupted. Inspired with deep sympathy for the whole pining creation, the prophet himself finally acts as priest, and prays for them to the compassionate God.

Ch. ii. 1 ff., without joining on to what precedes, shows how the prophet may have spoken on the approach of a fresh swarm of the dreaded insects. As to contents, this appeal rightly follows the one in ch. i., because it looks more from the present to the future, advancing from the presage to the day of Yahveh, which was only done incidentally in ch. i. 15. All the more earnestly and piercingly goes forth this time the call to sincere, sorrowful repentance, by which the Lord might yet be moved to desist from His purpose and turn aside the revelation of His wrath.

In ch. ii. 18 the information, that this day of humiliation which the nation had willingly appointed on the prophet's admonition, was attended with success, forms the transition to the encouraging section. Perhaps the gracious answer of God came on this very day of fasting, penitence, and prayer, and doubtless by the lips of the same prophet, who previously as God's messenger had conveyed the threat of heavy judgment. This answer ch. ii. 19 ff. promises in the immediate future the richer blessing as the plague had been grievous. Instead of drought, abundant and regular rain shall begin, and the army of locusts shall be suddenly driven away. In

the prosperity which springs up out of so terrible a time, the children of Zion shall recognise the gracious presence of their God. Yet this is not the consummation, but only a prelude to it.

There follows in ch. iii. 1 f., distinguished both in matter and time from the former undisturbed enjoyment of God-given happiness, a *rain of the Spirit*, which makes the rare privilege of divine illumination, granted always to prophets, the common possession of the entire nation. As Joel in general sees the inward in the outward, the beginning of the highest and last in the immediately present, as he discerns in the locust-army the forerunner of the last day, so in his eyes the abundant rain, which brought the visitation to an end (ch. ii. 23), is only a prelude to a corresponding higher blessing and gracious manifestation, namely, the rain of the Spirit, which shall fill the entire national community and make it an organ of prophetic activity, so that then what Moses once threw out as a wish scarcely to be ventured, becomes matter of fact, Num. xi. 29. The spiritual maturity of all members of the Church brought into direct, living union with God, as well as the equality arising among them through this relation, beside which all earthly distinctions vanish as of no importance, are characteristic marks of the consummation then reached by the people of God, ch. iii. 3 ff.—But the judgment also must be completed, the day of general retribution must finally come, which has only been deferred by God's longsuffering. But when it appears at last, it has no terror for the perfect Church of God. Deliverance from God's judgment is secured indeed, not by dwelling in Judæa-Jerusalem in itself, not by belonging outwardly to His people, but by personal confession of Yahveh and by taking refuge in Him, a course open by His gracious will even to those who are far off.

Ch. iv. 1 ff. Meantime the judgment of the nations is preparing in this form, that the heathen, seized with martial fury, assemble together in hostility to Yahveh's land and city.

Their wholesale destruction in the valley of Jehoshaphat is the antitype of the destruction of the locust-swarm (Delitzsch). And why should such a fate now overtake the heathen nations? Plainly after the recent suffering and anxiety on account of the physical calamity has been turned away, the remembrance of the outrages suffered not long before from heathen nations awakens again with painful feelings. Retribution shall come on these heathen for the arrogant revels which they, the conquerors of Jerusalem, held on Zion, and for the inhuman treatment which they dealt out to the captive Jerusalemites, selling them into distant lands where they are still dwelling. The judgment itself is rather mysteriously hinted than described: while the warlike hosts of the heathen gather in wild excitement on a plain near the holy city, the Lord, enthroned in calm majesty above them, delivers His judicial sentence and gives the signal to execute the judgment, whereupon heavenly forces carry out the sanguinary sickle and wine-press work, dark night veiling the horrible slaughter. But the people of God, thanks to their God who dwells in their midst, are hidden safely; and Judah, His land will shine after the terrible storm with a beauty and fertility never seen before, as the purified dwelling-place of a people that shall never know trouble, because at peace with God.

On the relation of Joel iii. to Acts ii. (and Rom. x. 13), cf. v. Orelli, *Old Testament Prophecy*, p. 217 ff. (T. & T. Clark.)

AMOS.

Introduction.

The person of Amos is known to us only from his own prophetic book. His name does not occur anywhere else in the Bible. עָמוֹס = burden-bearer (?). A Midrash explanation interprets it of his awkwardness in speech (??): שהיה עמום בלשונו למה נקרא שמו עמוס, see Levy, *Neuhebr. Wörterb.* iii. 663. The Church Fathers, who were unacquainted with Hebrew, took him to be the father of Isaiah, who, however, was called עָמוֹץ. See Knobel, *Prophet. der Hebräer*, ii. 144, where also the baseless rabbinical tradition is mentioned, that Amos was brother of King Amaziah. The heading ch. i. 1 credibly names the village Tekoa as his home (now the ruin Tekua), according to Jerome, situated twelve Roman miles (south) of Jerusalem, six miles (south) of Bethlehem, in the Judæan wilderness, the nearest part of which is called "desert of Tekoa," 2 Chron. xx. 20; 1 Macc. ix. 33. Jerome (*Prol. ad Am.*): Ultra nullus est viculus, ne agrestes quidem casæ et furnorum similes quas Afri appellant mapalia. Tanta est eremi vastitas. — Et quia humi arido atque arenoso nihil omnino frugum gignitur, cuncta sunt plena pastoribus, ut sterilitatem terræ compensent pecorum multitudine. According to ch. i. 1 and vii. 14, Amos was by calling a shepherd and sycamore-planter; he laid stress on this as showing that, not his own choice, but only God's extraordinary and irresistible call, which fetched him like Moses from following the herd, led him to come forward as a prophet.

The divine voice also sent him to Israel, the northern kingdom, more particularly to Bethel, the religious centre of that country. This took place according to the heading ch. i. 1, which is confirmed by ch. vii. 10 and the entire situation implied in the book, during the reign of Jeroboam II. and Uzziah. For the few years that the activity of Amos seems to have lasted, the time when these two kings reigned allows only too much room. True, a definite year is given as the initial term of his prophetic work (ch. i. 1, "two years before the earthquake"); but the exact date of this earthquake, which also falls according to Zech. xiv. 5 into the reign of Uzziah, is unknown. Amos himself foretold (ch. ii. 13 ff.) this important natural event, still memorable to a late posterity, and perhaps attained his great prophetic influence chiefly through the occurrence of this sign. In any case he delivered his next discourses only after this catastrophe had happened, referring to it already in ch. iii. 3 ff., iv. 11 (cf. also ch. viii. 8), but scarcely long afterward. Thus in time he is nearest to Joel, whose discourses he follows up in ch. i. 2, and also recalls at the close ch. ix. 13 ff. The political horizon of the oracles of Amos still coincides with that of Obadiah and Joel: Edomites, Philistines, Phœnicians, have made attacks on Israel (see on Amos i. 6), but the standpoint has meantime advanced considerably: the Syrians stand now in the foreground, and the Assyrians form the menacing background. The above indications of time are supported by the fact, that the Ephraimite land, which Amos has in view, is plainly enjoying a state of great prosperity, having risen anew to power and influence (cf. *e.g.* ch. vi. 13). This was the case under Jeroboam II., who had restored to the kingdom its early splendour (2 Kings xiv. 25). But this outward revival led only to more reckless indulgence; arrogance, luxury, and heathen practices smothered all better feelings. Thus the kingdom was hastening, without suspecting it, to the abyss. Then God sent to the land in Amos a preacher,

who urged to repentance with impressive earnestness. If any one could, he would have aroused the conscience with his powerful call. The power of his word was felt, in fact, by the rulers, especially the high priest at Bethel. Efforts were made by friendly as well as hostile representations to turn him aside,—the stern, unwelcome preacher (cf. ch. v. 10), who in his threats devoted king and people, throne and altar to destruction. But he was not to be driven away as long as the divine commission directed him to that land (ch. vii. 10 ff.). Knobel, Ewald, Keil, *et al.*, conjecture that later he returned to his Judæan fatherland and there composed his book. Late and quite untrustworthy accounts make him die a martyr's death under the ill treatment of Amaziah and his son (see in Knobel, p. 146).

The contents of his discourses and visions are, with the sole exception of the conclusion, of a menacing character. Like Isaiah later, in Judæa, he has to charge princes and judges with injustice and bribery, the higher classes generally with corruption of manners, above all with unbridled covetousness and indulgence, shameless licence and lust; along with this went ill administration of justice. The rich and powerful, in order to indulge their passions, attacked the possessions of the weak, and found connivance and complaisance for all their knavery and violence at the hands of the readily venal judges; cf. ch. ii. 6 ff., iii. 10, iv. 1, v. 7, 11 f., viii. 4 ff. No less than against these sins against neighbours Amos fights against apostasy from God, such as is seen in the image and idol worship practised at Bethel, Dan, Gilgal, Beersheba, and so in Israel and Judah, ch. ii. 4, iv. 3 ff., v. 5, 21 ff., viii. 14. This pretended Yahveh-worship in its heathen perversion is an abomination to the Lord, the Yahveh-images are idols. So far from Amos and Hosea being the first to denounce the Yahveh-images and requiring a purer and more spiritual worship of God than was hitherto required by the men of God, they, on the contrary, saw in those "calves" a heavy

offence, of which Israel was guilty (since Jeroboam I.), an unpardonable falling away from the former better knowledge, such as will take the people into exile. They therefore bear witness to the original absence of images in the worship of Yahveh (since Moses). The retribution, which Amos announces to the people on account of its incorrigible wickedness, appears indeed partially in the form of national calamities, like earthquakes, pestilence, drought, locust, plagues, etc. But the last and heaviest judgment which God will soon inflict on the land, is conquest by enemies, and in the wake of this the *exile*, ch. iii. 12 ff., iv. 2 (12), v. 5, 27, vi. 7, 11, 14, vii. 9, 11, ix. 1, 4, 8, 14. The Assyrians are meant, who indeed are not yet expressly named, as presently in Hosea, but plainly float before the seer's mind as God's avengers. For the rest, this menacing preacher is not without an outlook to a blessed time of grace. See the close of the book.

As to his mental idiosyncrasy, Amos stands in noteworthy contrast to Hosea, with whom he still shares the same sphere of work and the same task, bearing witness to the same divine purpose. Whereas Hosea in the midst of the preaching of judgment makes us look down into the unfathomable depths of God's love, Amos is the fearless herald of the majesty of this God and its terrors for sinners. This absolute divine power, which he can depict so eloquently, is, of course, no arbitrary power to which man must submit in blind fatalism, but deals with man in perfect accord with the moral law, which is testified to him by his conscience (cf. especially ch. v. 4, 6, 14 f.). Like an Elijah, Amos was to arouse the reprobate nation of Yahveh from its moral perversity and blindness. Not without reason had the Lord on this occasion chosen a simple, unsophisticated countryman for His witness. Such an one, unseduced by the glitter of outward greatness and worldly culture, must needs have felt most deeply the corruption of morals which reigned in the mansions of the

great and the houses of the rich, and came to light in God-forgetting luxury. If Amos denounces luxury (comparable in his aversion to wealth with all its evil train to James, the writer of the Epistle, Delitzsch), this is done because this parade and luxury are the fruit of many acts of injustice, as well as the source of unspeakable new extortions, and the reason why so many do not see the gravity of the position and grieve not for Joseph's hurt. That, for the rest, the Amos of inexorable severity had a heart, not merely of human sympathy, but of priestly compassion, he shows, not only in the tender elegiac strain, ch. v. 1 ff., but still more in his fervent intercessions, ch. vii. 2, 5.

As to form, the well-arranged book of Amos, which was plainly composed by Amos himself, is marked by regularity. It falls into an exordium (chs. i. and ii.), a first half composed of discourses (chs. iii. – vi.), and a second made up of visions (chs. vii.–ix.). The several parts are introduced and indicated by analogous formulas. So in the Introduction, ch. i. 3–ii. 5, a uniform scheme of seven parts obtains. The uniformity, however, is not tedious, but heightens the emphasis. Cf. further the beginning of the three discourses, ch. iii. 1, iv. 1, v. 1, and of the visions, ch. vii. 1, 4, 7, viii. 1. He also loves repetitions with a refrain; so cf. vii. 2 f. with 5 f., iv. 6, 8, 9, 10. The tone, despite all natural simplicity and strength, which occasionally tends to harshness, is often highly poetical. In particular, the prophet can depict the lofty and the terrible in a masterly way; occasionally he grows quite lyrical, as in ch. iv. 13, v. 8 f., ix. 2 ff. His images are original, frequently taken from country and shepherd life (cf. *e.g.* ch. iii. 4 ff., 12, iv. 1, *et al.*). Ewald: "This simple range of country life has quite filled his healthy imaginative power; one meets nowhere else among the prophets, images from country life of such pure originality and vivacity, and in such inexhaustible abundance; this also is evident, not merely from the numerous comparisons and

prophetic images proper; but this peculiarity of experience and mode of view in this prophet enters into the minutest veins of conception and speech."—In regard to the integrity of the book, particular verses indeed have been critically attacked, but without conclusive reason, like ch. vi. 2 (see there), ch. v. 8 f.; or without any tenable proof, like ch. i. 2, iv. 13, ix. 5 f.

Of literature on Amos there is specifically to be mentioned: Gustav Baur, *Der Proph. Amos*, Giessen 1847.

Exordium, Announcement of the Judgment, Chs. I., II.

I. 1. Discourses of Amos, who was among the sheep-masters of Tekoa, which he saw respecting Israel in the days of Uzziah, the king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, son of Joash, the king of Israel, two years before the earthquake. 2. Then he said:

Yahveh roars from Zion, and from Jerusalem he makes his voice sound forth; then the pastures of the shepherds wither

Chapter I.

Ver. 1. The heading (cf. Introd.) "plainly comes from an ancient skilful hand" (Ewald), which does not preclude the supposition that the parenthetical relative clause אשר־מתקוע may have been added later (so Delitzsch). He is right. It is true Amos calls himself (ch. vii. 14) בֹּקֵר, properly cattle-herd, whereas נֹקֵד means sheep-breeder, after a special sort of sheep called in Arabic *nakad*. But that Amos was a shepherd is stated also in ch. vii. 15 (צאן, used only of small beasts). Thus בֹּקֵר stands there generally for *shepherd*, somewhat like *βουκόλος*.—*Discourses* of Amos, *which he saw;* see Isa. ii. 1 (note in Orelli's Com.). The usual phrase in the headings, דְּבַר ה׳ (sing.). But see Jer. i. 1. That the "discourses of Amos" are divinely revealed, is implied in אשר חזה. On the indication of time, see Introd. Ver. 2. As a starting-point, in a sense text or theme, for the introductory survey, Amos selects a saying of his countryman Joel, to which he gives a rural and also north-Israelite turn, Joel iv. 16.

and the head of Carmel dries up. 3. Thus says Yahveh: For three misdeeds of *Damascus*, yea for four, I no longer turn it aside: because they threshed Gilead with threshing-rollers of iron. 4. So will I send fire into the house of Hazael, and it shall consume the palaces of Benhadad. 5. And I will break in pieces the bar of Damascus, and root them out that dwell in the sin-valley, and the sceptre-bearer from the pleasure-house. And Aram's people go in captivity

The verse briefly characterises the prophet's preaching. It has Zion for its inner standpoint, judgment for its content, the kingdom of Ephraim for its principal goal. The thunder-peal does not announce refreshing rain, but the fiery heat of divine wrath, before which the land languishes,—even the freshest pastures, even *Carmel*, which is so rich in vegetable growth, the chain of hills cutting across the land of Israel. Ver. 3. *Damascus*, the capital of the Syrian kingdom, which, especially under *Hazael*, harshly afflicted Israel, and conquered the entire land east of the Jordan (cf. 2 Kings viii. 12, x. 32 f.), is overtaken by judgment on account of three, yea four outrages. The numbers rise in a climax (cf. Prov. xxx. 18 ff.), as in *Odys.* v. 306: τρὶς μάκαρες Δαναοὶ καὶ τετράκις; Virg. *Æn.* i. 94: o terque quaterque beati. Three, yea four deadly sins make punishment inevitable; לא אשיבנו, properly, *I turn it not round*, do not cause it to return, cf. Joel ii. 14. But only the one main offence is always mentioned, the worst. *Threshed Gilead with iron* (*i.e.* furnished with iron spikes) *threshing-sledges*, see Isa. xxviii. 27. Either this is a figurative expression (like 2 Kings xiii. 7, perhaps) for harsh treatment generally, or it gives an example of what went on in the conquest of Gilead, captives being so done to death. Cf. also 2 Kings viii. 12, and the analogous reproach in the latter case, ver. 13. Ver. 4. *Benhadad* (III.), son and successor of the usurper *Hazael*, 2 Kings xiii. 24; cf. Schrader, vol. i. 203. These kings had adorned Damascus with splendid structures. In Josephus' days the Damascenes boasted of this, especially of Benhadad II. and of this Hazael, *Ant.* ix. 4. 6. Ver. 5. Damascus succumbs to foes. און is the name of the Syrian sun-city (like the Egyptian), Heliopolis, Baalbec, cf. Ezek. xxx. 17. Instead of valley of the sun-city, Amos calls it valley of the sin-city, or rather idol-city.—The בקעת א׳ is the present Bekâa, valley-basin between Libanus and Antilibanus, called also Cœle-Syria.—*He who holds the sceptre* = the reigning monarch.—עדן, with double Seghol, although it has nothing to do with the Bene Eden,

to Kir, has Yahveh said.—6. Thus says Yahveh: For three misdeeds of *Gaza*, yea for four, I no longer turn it aside: because they carried away captive a whole captivity to deliver it up to Edom. 7. So I send fire into the wall of Gaza, that it may consume her palaces. 8. And I will root out the

2 Kings xix. 12; Ezek. xxvii. 23; it is rather to be sought in the vicinity of Antilibanus, where also Greek authors know a παράδεισος, and was perhaps the summer palace of the Damascus ruler. The name will allude to עֵדֶן in the appellative sense. The place cannot be fixed certainly. Jusieh, near Riblah, at the north end of that high valley, has been thought of; or the present village of Jubadin, near Malûla, east of Antilibanus.—Riehm, differently, combines with Ezek. xxvii. 23, 2 Kings xix. 12, etc., *Handwörterb. Alt.* p. 176 f.—*Kir* (see on Isa. xxii. 6, and Volck in Herzog, i. 602), the land, from which, according to Amos ix. 7, the Syrians came, will be the land of their exile. This threat Tiglathpileser fulfilled, 2 Kings xvi. 9. Ver. 6. On the uniformity of these oracles, see at the close. *Gaza* precedes, as representing the Philistines; as an important place of trade, it perhaps took a special part in the slave-trade which is condemned; it is still the most important Philistine place (16,000 to 18,000 inhabitants).—*Full captivity*, an entire deportation, by which an entire stretch of country was stripped of inhabitants. הסגיר as in Obad. 14. But if this charge recalls the one raised there and in Joel iv. 4 ff. (iii. 4), we must not, with several expositors, think of the same events (2 Chron. xxi. 16 f.); for in Amos the Edomites do not deliver up prisoners (Obad. 14), but Philistines and Phœnicians deliver up to Edom (not to the Bene Javan). Amos no doubt combines in this list of sins incidents from different times, but perhaps has here chiefly in view somewhat later incidents than Obadiah and Joel. In the conquest of Gilead by the Syrians (ver. 3), perhaps many inhabitants of the east-Jordan country were first sold to the neighbouring Phœnicians, and through these came into the hands of the Philistines; both finally delivered a great number of them into the hands of the Edomites,—who had been especially bitter against the Israelites since Joram's days,—a course of twofold cruelty. Ver. 7. *Gaza*, as even its name, "the strong one," says, always famed for the strength of its walls. Ver. 8. Three other cities of the Philistine Pentapolis are named. Only Gath is absent, which was conquered (2 Kings xii. 18), perhaps destroyed by Hazael, and therefore may

inhabitants from Ashdod and the sceptre-bearer from Askelon, and will turn my hand against Ekron, and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, has the Lord Yahveh said.—9. Thus says Yahveh: For three misdeeds of *Tyre*, yea for four, I no longer turn it aside: because they delivered up a whole captivity to Edom, and did not remember the covenant of brethren. 10. So I send fire into the ring-wall of Tyre, that it may consume her palaces!—11. Thus says Yahveh: For three misdeeds of *Edom*, yea for four, I no longer turn it aside: because he pursued his brother with the sword and suppressed his pity, that his wrath and his fury may tear perpetually—which he keeps for ever. 12. So I send fire upon Teman, that it may consume the palaces of Bozrah.—Thus says Yahveh: For three misdeeds of the *sons of Ammon*, yea for four, I no longer turn it aside: because they ripped up the women with child in Gilead for the purpose of enlarging their

seem to have been sufficiently humbled.—*The remnant, i.e.* not merely those not named, but also the last remnant; therefore they perish without exception; cf. ch. ix. 12 and Jer. xlvii. 4. Not the Assyrian, but the Roman rule, brought the disappearance of the Philistine nationality in its train (Del.). Ver. 9. *Tyre*, cf. Joel iv. 4 (iii. 4); but see above on ver. 6. It is an aggravating circumstance that the Tyrians did not remember the friendly alliance existing between Solomon and Hiram at the time when their kingdoms were most prosperous; see 1 Kings v. 26; cf. ch. ix. 13 (אָחִי). Ver. 10. Tyre also was world-famous for its strength; see Orelli on Isa. xxiii. Ver. 11. Edom, already twice named as hostile, itself comes into the list. The charge agrees with the one in Obad. 14 and Joel iv. 19 (iii.): It even drew the sword against its brother-nation, when the latter was overpowered by foes, and so ruthlessly stifled natural compassion. Its enmity has not yet ceased; since the revolt under Jehoram it has constantly bloodthirsty rage. שְׁחָתָה, pausal form, with ה instead of הּ. Ver. 12. *Teman*, Edomite district.—*Bozrah*, Edomite capital, Jer. xlix. 13. Ver. 13. *The sons of Ammon* assisted in the conquest of poor Gilead by the Syrian power, in order to obtain a gain of territory, as later they made use of the deportation by Tiglathpileser; see Jer. xlix. 1–6.—*Ripping up* of *pregnant* women; see Hos. xiv. 1. "Inhuman cruelty was always the characteristic trait of the Ammonites, as a boasting spirit was of the Moabites, malicious

borders. 14. So I kindle fire in the wall of Rabbah, that it may consume her palaces with trumpet-blast on the day of battle, with uproar in the day of the whirlwind. 15. And their king shall go into captivity, he and his princes together, has Yahveh said.

II. 1. Thus says Yahveh: For three misdeeds of *Moab*, and for four, I no longer turn it aside: because he burned the bones of the king of Edom into lime. 2. So I send fire upon Moab, that it may consume the palaces of Kerioth, and Moab shall die in tumult with trumpet-blast, with sound of horns. And I root out the judge from his midst, and all his princes I will kill with him, has Yahveh said.—4. Thus says Yahveh: For three misdeeds of *Judah*, yea for four, I no longer turn it aside: because they disregarded the law of Yahveh and did not keep his commandments; and their deceitful images have led

craft of the Edomites" (Del.) Ver. 14. *Rabbah*, Ammonite capital; see Orelli on Jer. xlix. 2.—והצתי (יצת) for וישלחתי. Poetry and prophecy affect a certain interchange of words in such refrain-like repetitions.—The hostile power is represented, not merely as a consuming fire, but also as a rushing hurricane, which carries the people into banishment. Ver. 15. מלכם, their king, as the parallel clause (ושריו) proves, meant of the actual king; whereas Jeremiah, in the dependent passage (xlix. 3) is thinking of the god of the Ammonites.

Chapter II.

Ver. 1. The division of chapters should here be quite ignored. —*Moab.* The outrage charged against it of *burning the bones of the Edomite king to lime* (*i.e.* so that not even the bones were spared in burning the corpse, but were carefully crushed, and the dust scattered; differently 1 Sam. xxxi. 12 f.!)—an act altogether abhorrent to Semitic feeling, which in addition condemned cremation—is not related elsewhere. Probably this misdeed belongs to the time when the Edomite king was in alliance with Israel and Judah, and against Moab (King Mesha), 2 Kings iii. 1 ff., 12. *Kerioth*, named as the Moabite capital (cf. Jer. xlviii. 24), as in Mesha's inscription, line 13, according to the edition of Smend and Socinus. Ver. 3. שופט, synonymous with תומך שבט, ch. i. 5, 8. The fem. suffixes apply to the Moabite community. Ver. 4. מאסם (pronounce:

them astray, which their fathers ran after. 5. Lo, I will send fire upon Judah, that it may consume the palaces of Jerusalem!

6. Thus says Yahveh: For three misdeeds of Israel, yea for four, I no longer turn it aside: because they sold the righteous man for money, and the needy man for a pair of shoes! 7. Who pant after dust of the earth on the head of the poor, and twist the way of the innocent; and a man with his father—they go to the harlot, that they may profane my holy name! 8. And on garments taken in pledge they crouch beside every altar, and wine of those fined they drink in the

mŏ'ŏsâm), cf. Hos. iv. 6.—כזביהם, here concretely, their worthless, lying images. Ver. 6. In *Israel's* case, a similar introduction to the others; but not content with one reproach, a long denunciation is poured out. *Because they sold the righteous man for money*, refers to the venality of the judges, or the hard-heartedness with which they delivered up the poor innocent man to slavery for money (which he cannot pay); in any case, the second clause refers to the latter: *and the poor man for a pair of shoes* (cf. ch. viii. 4, 6); *i.e.* for a trifling matter, which he owes, hard-hearted judges and creditors make him a slave. Ver. 7. *Who pant*, gasp eagerly, does not mean that they envy the poor man even a bit of dust, which he bears on his head as a sign of grief (because it is still a bit of ground; so Hitz. *et al.*), but that they have no rest until they have brought the poor into trouble and sorrow.—עניים, properly, those bowed down, *submissi*, the meek, harmless, and defenceless, who do harm to no one; proudly and selfishly they cross the path of these, and injure them in their right. With injustice and hard-heartedness gross immorality is connected, so that father and son meet at the harlot's house.—*That they may profane.* Such vice is like malignant, intentional blasphemy of Yahveh's name, which they still carry on their lips and think they honour. Ver. 8 describes what goes on at their luxurious religious feasts. According to the humane law, Ex. xxii. 25, they ought to treat pledged garments with the utmost regard; they lie on such signs of their harshness in their worship of God!—יטו, *recline* thereon, cf. מִטָּה, like κλίνη—κλίνω. Just so the *wine*, with which they then carouse, is extorted by their wretched dispensing of justice. ענש, *to fine* one judicially. By אלהיהם the true God plainly severs Himself from these rites, although certainly they were celebrated in Yahveh's honour

house of their gods. 9. But yet I destroyed the Amorite before them, whose lofty growth was like the lofty growth of cedars, and he was robust like the oaks. And I destroyed his fruit above, and his roots beneath. 10. And yet I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and caused you to wander in the wilderness forty years, to take the Amorite's land in possession. 11. And I raised up from your sons some as prophets, and from your young men (some) as Nazarites—is it not so, ye children of Israel? runs Yahveh's oracle,— 12. then you gave the Nazarites wine to drink, and the

(ver. 7). Ver. 9. As Hosea often does, Amos contrasts with this base conduct the proofs of Yahveh's love, which should have insured Him their gratitude: *I*, in contrast with the false gods whom they now serve. The *Amorite* (sing., in keeping with the usual personification of the nation) stands here as the most dreaded representative of the Canaanites (Josh. xxiv. 18, *et al.*); in this tribe there were still giants like King Og (Deut. iii. 11; Josh. xiii. 12); he is therefore compared to mighty trees,—like the *cedar* in height, the *oak* in strength,—which again gives rise to the proverbial saying: from root to tip, or stump and stick; cf. Job xviii. 16. Ver. 10 goes back to former benefits. Ver. 11 speaks of the spiritual powers bestowed on the members of the nation. The northern kingdom was especially blessed with *prophets*—Deborah, Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, the "prophets' schools," etc. The Lord raised up *Nazarites*, who consecrated themselves to Yahveh by a vow of abstinence (Herzog, x. 426 ff.), by awakening in the young men (occasionally in elders, 1 Sam. i. 11) a resolve of the kind, whereas a proper divine call to this state (Judg. xiii. 7) remained an exception. Our passage shows that there were not a few such Nazarites in early days, although the historical books say nothing of them. That they are to be combined in *cœnobia* with the prophets' sons (Vatke) does not clearly follow from this passage. Ver. 12. The tacit witness which the last-mentioned ascetics bore to the holy God by their abstinence, was just as irksome to them as the audible witness of the prophets; hence they wickedly frustrated God's calling, and robbed themselves of great good which should have accrued to the community from these individuals. *Wine* forbidden of old to the Nazarites; which, indeed, is not expressly mentioned in the case of Samuel and Samson, but in the case of the mother of the latter, Judg. xiii. 4, 7, 14, and Num. vi. 3. Ver. 13. As in

prophets you ordered: "Ye shall not prophesy!" 13. Behold, I make a shaking among you, as the waggon shakes which is well filled with sheaves. 14. Then refuge vanishes from the swift, and the strong cannot harden his strength, nor the mighty man save his life. And the archer will not keep his ground, nor the swift-footed escape, nor the rider on horseback escape with his life. 15. And he whose heart is courageous among the mighty men, he shall flee away naked in that day, runs Yahveh's oracle.

Exposition.

Contents of the Exordium, chs. i., ii. Announcement of the Judgment. 1. The sevenfold Prelude of the Judgment on Heathen and Jews, i. 1–ii. 5; 2. Apostrophe to the most guilty Nation, Israel, ii. 6–16.

This exordium is as distinctive of Amos as Hos. i.–iii. is of that prophet. Amos, transported from the pure country air into the poisonous vapours hanging bodefully over the great world, sees nothing but lightning flashes of divine judgment, and hears nothing but the thunder-peal of divine threatening. The wrath of God, roused up by insults to His holiness, makes the round of the horizon like a storm, until the black cloud settles at last over the people, on whom it is really destined to discharge itself. First, foreign and hostile peoples are

the case of the former nations, here also the sentence follows on the accusation; but this also at greater length. העיק, as explained by most, "to oppress," does not suit. Rather the meaning *to cause to shake*, afterwards intransitively, is required by the context. If we are unwilling to assign this meaning to the word, comparing it with Arabic *ʿâǵa*, *ʿâḳa*, *ʿâḳa* (עוג, עוק, עוך), with Hitz. (formerly) and Steiner, we must read תָּפִיק, מֵפִיק. The *shaking* of the earth is compared to that of a heavily-laden harvest waggon (תחתיכם, which is under your feet), referring to the earthquake, as vv. 14, 15 prove; no courage, no weapon, no strength avails then: the most courageous must flee, and even flight is cut off, so that there is no escaping even on horseback. Ver. 14. To confirm his *strength* = our: to collect oneself.

smitten: 1. Damascus, or the Syrian kingdom (ch. i. 3–5), the greatest and most dreaded land with which Israel came into fatal contact in the last decades, and on which God's majesty is to take revenge.—2. Gaza and the Philistine towns generally (ch. i. 6–8), who have anew displayed their old hostility to Israel-Judah.—3. Tyre (i. 9 f.), the greatly envied, impregnable city of the world's commerce, which has taken advantage of the suffering of Yahveh's people through vulgar robbers. Next in the list come three tribes akin in blood to the Israelites: 4. Edom (i. 11 f.), nearest akin and also most hostile; 5. Ammon, i. 13–15; 6. Moab, ii. 1–3; and finally (ch. ii. 4, 5), as seventh (!), Judah-Jerusalem, His own people in a neighbouring State, which probably Samaria would not be sorry to see humiliated. But then, after making the round of all the neighbours, foreign and akin, hostile and friendly, God's judgment bursts most violently on Israel itself (ch. ii. 6–16).

As concerns the neighbouring non-Israelite peoples which are rebuked, the punishment announced to them certainly has reference chiefly to the attacks they had made directly or indirectly on God's people. But we should observe that all the deadly sins mentioned form a violation of the most general divine precepts well-known even to the heathen. The heathen are judged according to the degree of their knowledge. "Crushing with iron sledges, delivering captives to bitter foes (Edom), forgetting the brotherly bond, killing a brother, stifling pity, ripping up pregnant women, removing boundaries, burning the bones of a dead man,—these are too obviously moral outrages, trangressions of the simplest moral laws" (Schmoller). The judgment on Judah, on the other hand, proceeds on its relation to the divine Torah, to the law, which is again a sum of individual precepts or ordinances, given specially by God to this nation. Like Hosea (ch. iv. 6, viii. 12), Amos as Yahveh's representative stands on the firm ground of a divinely revealed legislation, for the neglect of

which he has to rebuke the nation. That this Torah coincides exactly with the present Pentateuch, is as little to be asserted as that it contained no ritual ordinances. The relation of Judah to this law is again like that of their backsliding fathers, after a brief powerful reaction had begun in the first days of Jehoash. Thus, despite its possession of divine revelation, it is not spared (here already Rom. ii. 13 holds good; cf. Amos iii. 2 !), but is associated as seventh with the heathen nations, and smitten with the same fate as these.

And Israel? This is not brought up last of all because it is innocent, but, on the contrary, as the most guilty nation to which the messenger of doom is really sent. If it has listened to the former sentences on foes and friends perhaps with self-conscious security, nay satisfaction, it must now learn that its case is the worst in the Lord's eyes. In the oracle ch. ii. 6 ff., in the accusation against this people, the limit hitherto observed is too narrow for the prophet, who breaks out at once into a whole series of reproaches. Above all, it is the unprincipled administration of justice which angers him (as somewhat later Isaiah in Judah), the oppression of the poor and weak by legal and illegal means. In association therewith appears next shameless lust and boundless sensuality among the well-to-do, along with idolatry, which gives the reins to such passions; whereas Yahveh with His demand of strict purity is forsaken or worshipped only in name, notwithstanding the unique claims He has on this people. This oracle (ii. 6 ff.) shows us what sort of people the prophet has to do with, and is like a special introduction to this book. For the rest, chs. i., ii., despite their introductory character, form an independent discourse, as is shown by the peculiar threat (ch. ii. 13–15) in which it ends. Here plainly a terrible, destructive earthquake is foretold, clearly the one mentioned in ch. i. 1. Hitzig, who explains in the same way, certainly adds: "But the words were probably not uttered then, but only written afterward" (!). Cf. Herzog, *Encykl.*

xvi. 729 f. Conversely, we may suppose that the prophet largely owed his great influence to the fulfilment of this threat (see after ch. iii.), and for this very reason the heading alludes to that event.

First Threatening Discourse: the Approaching Judgment, Ch. iii.

III. 1. Hear this word which Yahveh has spoken respecting you, ye children of Israel, respecting the whole family which I brought up out of the land of Egypt, namely: 2. You only I have known of all families of the earth; therefore will I visit on you all your iniquities. 3. Shall then two meet together, unless they have made agreement?

Chapter III.

Ver. 1. The addition respecting *the whole family*, recalls the obligation under which they stand to Yahveh in consequence of that deliverance (cf. ch. ii. 10).—לאמר introduces "this word." Ver. 2. ידע, in the sense of intimate appropriation: known and regarded as mine. If God has entered into special relation to this people, He will take all the more exact notice of their trespasses; cf. Luke xii. 48. Ver. 3 ff. The long series of causes and effects enumerated, shows that inferences may be securely drawn from obvious effects to the cause, or from clear symptoms to a still concealed event. The aim is to convince the hearers of the connection between the prophet's oracles and the events of the time, which again leads to the higher common author of the events and the prophecy. A heavy calamity has already happened (ver. 6), probably the earthquake foretold by the prophet two years before. Ver. 3 perhaps alludes to this. Where *two meet together;* as here the prophet's words strangely coincide with God's dispensations, there must have been an agreement between the two (here God and the prophet). Others understand ver. 3 of God and Israel, who had bound themselves by a covenant to go together. In that case we should expect conversely: Will not two who have made agreement also go together? Rather in the whole series of questions the prophet's aim is to establish his good right to speak, as this had, without doubt, been denied to him from the first; cf.

4. Will a lion roar in the wood, unless he has prey? Will a lion make his voice sound from his den, unless he has taken (something)? 5. Does a bird fall into the net on the ground, unless it has a gin? Does the net rise aloft from the ground, unless it has certainly caught (something)? 6. Or is the trumpet blown in the city without the people trembling? Or does calamity happen in a city, unless Yahveh has done it? 7. For the Lord Yahveh does nothing, unless he has revealed his purpose to his servants the prophets. 8. If a lion roars, who will not fear? If the Lord Yahveh speaks, who will not prophesy?

9. Proclaim ye respecting the palaces at Ashdod and respecting the palaces in the land of Egypt, and say: Assemble yourselves on the mountains of Samaria, and see the many tumults within them and the oppressions in their midst, 10. and how they know not to do what is right,

ch. ii. 12. Ver. 4. The *roaring* of the lion is a sure sign that he has the prey already in his claws—to be referred to God's voice, which the prophet made to sound forth in menace. Ver. 5. The fall of the *bird* is not by chance, but in consequence of an intentionally laid instrument. The suffering of the nation does not overtake it by chance, but is prepared by a higher will (God). פח ה', the net spread on the ground on which the bird, caught by the gin (מוקש), is thrown down. The suff. לה applies to the bird. The second time a net is meant, which springs up when the prey comes within its reach. Ver. 6. The *alarm-horn* is always heard with terror as a sure sign of danger. So should the warning voice of prophecy be heard. Or, is not every calamity God's work, and therefore capable of being foretold by His messenger? Ver. 7 expressly says that this is done. Thus the prophets are the called watchmen, who know the voice of doom, and their threats must therefore be heard with terror. Ver. 8. But if God thus speaks to the prophet, the latter must prophesy. He is impelled thereto as irresistibly as every one on hearing the lion's voice is involuntarily seized with terror. Ver. 9. The prophet calls together foreign nations that they may behold and testify with horror the disorder and confusion in Samaria; on such a city judgment must come.—מהומה, uproar, tumult. We have here to picture stormy scenes of violence. Ver. 10. The simple Amos cannot endure the lofty

is Yahveh's oracle, who store up injustice and violence in their palaces! 11. On this account has the Lord Yahveh said: Distress, and all round the land! And he makes thy firmness sink from thee, so that thy palaces shall be plundered. 12. Thus says Yahveh: Like as the shepherd snatches two legs from the jaws of the lion, or an ear-lap; so shall the children of Israel be rescued, who sit in Samaria in a corner of the divan, and on damask of the couch. 13. Hear ye, and testify to the house of Jacob, is the oracle of the Lord Yahveh, the God of hosts: 14. Verily, on the day when I visit Israel's sins on it, I will visit the altars of Bethel, so that the horns of the altar shall be broken off, and fall to the earth. 15. And I will break in pieces the winter-house with the summer-house, so that the ivory-houses shall perish, and many houses come to an end, is Yahveh's oracle.

buildings of the city, and princes (ארמנות), and splendid palaces, because of the injustice they conceal. Ver. 11. סביב ה', not "environment of the land" (Ewald), but ו is epexegetical: and indeed. Ver. 12. If distress threatens on every side, is salvation still possible? Yes, but of what kind? With trouble one will rescue some *disjecta membra* of the nation from destruction, as the shepherd Amos originally and drastically depicts. Such will be the lot of those who now lie in comfort on their couches.—דמשק, pronounced somewhat differently from the name of the city, denotes the fabric made there with great skill; as we say "damask." Ver. 13. The hearers first addressed are to declare what they hear to the whole house of Israel. Ver. 14. *Bethel* (cf. ch. v. 5), as the chief seat of the calf-worship set up by Jeroboam, is the scene of the worst transgression of the house of Israel. That this whole system is an abomination to the Lord, appears very clearly. With the *horns* the atoning power and the divine consecration of an altar fall to the ground. Ver. 15. In the same way, the buildings of luxury come to a sudden end. Many respectable people, as well as kings (Jer. xxxvi. 22), had special residences for the cold and hot seasons. *Ivory-houses*, *i.e.* houses whose rooms were inlaid with ivory. Ahab built such a house, 1 Kings xxii. 39.—*Numerous houses*, cf. Isa. v. 8.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. iii. First Threatening Discourse. Judgment drawing nigh. 1. Its Visible Signs, vv. 1–8; 2. Its Full Descent on Samaria, vv. 9–15.

There follow, characterised by the same introductory words (ch. iii. 1, iv. 1, v. 1), three threatening discourses, explaining and enlarging the accusations made in ch. ii. 6 ff. They fall in a somewhat later time than chs. i., ii., as the earthquake there threatened (cf. ch. ii. 13 ff. with i. 1) has meantime happened; consequently two years have passed since the prophet's first appearance. For that catastrophe is not spoken of for the first time in ch. iv. 11 as past, but ch. iii. 3 ff. (cf. especially ver. 6 f.) is already uttered under the immediate impression awakened by that event. According to the latter section, by the occurrence of that terrible calamity the prophet's warning voice has received a powerful confirmation, and his ministry an irrefutable justification: he has only said what he was compelled to say under divine constraint. But that alarming event is itself, to the prophet's knowledge, merely a sign of God's displeasure, a prelude of worse judgment, which will bring to a sudden end both the extravagant living in Samaria and the God-displeasing worship at Bethel (vv. 9–15). The simple, uncorrupted shepherd reproves here the luxury of the dwellings (ch. iii. 12, 15), as in ch. vi. 4 ff. he rebukes the luxurious indulgence of the table. Wanton effeminacy is to him a sin, and not without reason; for whoever is housed like these Samaritans while so many are homeless, whoever revels as these magnates did (ch. vi. 4 ff.) while the poor hunger, shows a heart filled with utter selfishness, and without feeling for others' need. Yea, still more: This wealth has grown so great through extortion and oppression of the poor; the tears and blood of those robbed of their means cleave to it. The reason why Amos so hates the grand buildings, is that "injustice is stored up" in them (ch. iii. 10).

Second Threatening Discourse: the Accusation Aggravated, Ch. iv.

IV. 1. Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan, that are on the mountain of Samaria! who oppress the poor, who crush the needy, who say to their lords, Give us to drink. 2. The Lord Yahveh has sworn by his holiness, Verily, behold, days will come upon you, when they shall lift you up with hooks, and your hindmost with fishing nets. 3. And you shall go forth by breaches in the wall, every one straight before him, and shall fling away the Rimmon-image,* is Yahveh's oracle.

Chapter IV.

Ver. 1. שמעו, masc. as general form instead of feminine. *Bashan-cows*, fat, well-fed, such as the rich meadow-land of Bashan produces. The prophet is reminded of them by the luxurious, bloated ladies of Samaria, whom one only need look at to know what indulgent lives they lead. Here also we have rustic outspokenness, less in ridicule than anger; this luxuriousness costs the poor of the land dear. To satisfy the greed of the wives, the husbands must oppress the poor.—*Their lords*, the husbands are called in good patriarchal style (Gen. xviii. 12, cf. 1 Pet. iii. 6), but here ironically, as the men are the obedient servants of the masterful women. That in some circumstances woman is harsher and more cruel than man, see, *e.g.* 1 Kings xxi. 7 ff.—That we may *drink*. On drunkenness in Samaria, cf. Isa. xxviii. 1. Ver. 2. The word of God announced follows.—By *his holiness*, His holy nature, God *swears*, as in ch. vi. 8 by His soul, by Himself; He presents His holy nature as a pledge that something will happen, so that the hallowing of His name will depend on this. The inexact masc. suffixes interchange with the fem. suff. in keeping with the freedom of Hebrew idiom.—ונשא, Niph. impersonal passive with accus.—צנות and סירות, properly thorns (then usually סִירִים); here, as the adjunct דוגה makes clear, fish-hooks, fishing-nets. אחרית, not after-growth, brood (Hitz.), but your hindmost ones, most secret ones; cf. ch. viii. 10, ix. 1. As ver. 3 shows, the meaning is, that they will be brought out of their chambers, where they feel as comfortable as the fish in the water, and be let down over the wall, like fish dangling on the line, in order to escape the investing foe. Ver. 3. Since the gates are watched by the enemy, they are let out at places where the wall is broken by the besiegers,

4. Come to Bethel, and—sin, to Gilgal—sin still more! And bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three days! 5. And with that which is leavened kindle thank-offerings, and proclaim freewill libations, publish aloud; for so indeed it pleaseth you, ye children of Israel, is the oracle of the Lord Yahveh. 6. And yet I also inflicted on you whiteness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all

and so has lost its original height. Every one *straight before him*, in the hope of creeping through the circle of besiegers. Others apply תצאנה to the captives going out under escort. The meaning depends on the difficult words והשלכתנה ה'. The former word (longer original form for והישלכתן) Gesenius, *et al.*, read as Hoph.: you shall be cast into the fortress, הַרְמוֹן (=ארמון), which form cannot be proved to exist. LXX, *καὶ ἀποῤῥιφήσεσθε εἰς τὸ ὄρος τὸ Ῥομμάν*, and therefore inserted ר, and perhaps read וְהִשְׁלַכְתֶּן הָרָה הָרְמוֹנָה. In fact, the image of the god *Rimmon* (Assyr. Ramman) is meant, but perhaps also of a goddess of this name. The local reference is strange, as one cannot really believe that in such a flight these images are dragged first to the hills. Hence it is perhaps best to strike out ה instead of adding ר: והשלכתנה הדמונה. The idol-image, dear to the women, they cast away in disgust as superfluous ballast. Isa. ii. 20 depends on this passage. Ver. 4 f. Bitterly ironical in meaning: Go on with your worship; only sin comes of it; practise it still more earnestly, and you sin all the more. *Bethel*, ch. iii. 14; *Gilgal*, Hos. iv. 15.—לבקר, with distributive ל, properly always in the morning. Instead of from time to time merely, let them slay their freewill-offerings every morning; instead of paying tithes every three years (Deut. xxvi. 12), let them do it every three days. Their zeal can only make the matter worse, as worship in these places, and in the forms current there, is simply sin. Ver. 5. The kindling with what is leavened is a characteristic deviation of the Ephraimites from the Mosaic canon, Lev. ii. 11, according to which nothing leavened should be burned. Even in the thank-offerings, Lev. vii. 11, 13, the leavened loaves mentioned were not designed for burning. Another custom which, with good reason, seems offensive to the prophet (cf. Matt. vi. 2), was the publishing of the freewill-offerings of individuals before the whole congregation. So rightly Delitzsch, whereas most expositors refer to challenges to freewill-offerings. The indecency of these customs is indicated by this: "So forsooth it pleases you." Ver. 6. There follows then (as a supple-

your places; but you returned not to me, is Yahveh's oracle. 7. And yet I also withheld the rain from you, when there were still three months to harvest; and I caused rain to fall on one city, and on another city I let no rain fall; one plot was rained on, and another plot, on which it rained not, withered. 8. Then two, three cities tottered to one city to drink water, without being satisfied; but you returned not to me, is Yahveh's oracle. 9. I smote you with blasting and mildew. Very often your gardens and your vineyards and your fig-trees and your olive-trees the locust consumed; but you returned not to me, is Yahveh's oracle. 10. I sent pestilence upon you

ment to the displays of favour, ch. ii. 9 ff.) an enumeration of divine penal visitations, which have effected nothing, and therefore have not proved a means of grace: 1. *Famine and dear times.* וְגַם belongs to the whole sentence: this also I did, but it availed nothing. אֲנִי with emphasis, as in ver. 9 and ch. ii. 9 ff.: I it was who did it.—*Whiteness of teeth*, euphemism for the state when one has nothing to bite and break.—שׁוּב עַד, on Hos. xiv. 2. Ver. 7 f. 2. *Want of water, days of drought.* מָטָר, cf. Joel i. 13. The latter rain is meant, which comes toward the end of February, properly two months before the harvest; but the harvest month is also reckoned in Hebrew fashion. God's sovereign rule is shown in this, that He made it rain on one field and not on another. Ver. 8. *Two, three cities tottered*, paints the feeble gait of the emaciated people. The stores of one city, which had to supply two or three, were, of course, soon exhausted. The famine mentioned in ver. 6 may have been caused by plagues, such as those in vv. 7–9; but it is not placed in relation to them, but is prefixed more generally. Ver. 9. To this were added—3. *Failure of harvest and locusts.* שִׁדָּפוֹן, burning, blackening of the corn by hot winds, Gen. xli. 6 ff.—יֵרָקוֹן, mildew, also in consequence of drought, not of excessive moisture.—הַרְבּוֹת, adverbial infinitive, stands first in a peculiar way.—הַגָּזָם, on Joel i. 4. The prophet here glances back at Joel's age. Ver. 10. 4. *Pestilence and strokes of war. Egypt* felt this scourge of God as the last and worst plague, Ex. xii. 29 f. In the same way God visited Israel just as heavily. Add to this the miseries of war: Their best manhood perished; at the same time, they had the disgust of seeing their valuable *steeds* carried off as the victor's prey. A great field of corpses near at hand (וּבְאַפְּכֶם, with ו epexeg., as in ch. iii. 11: and indeed) must have been in the mind of the Israelites, where their army was

after the manner of Egypt. I slew your young men with the sword, along with the capture of your horses, and caused the stench of your camp to ascend even into your nostrils; but you returned not to me, is Yahveh's oracle. 11. I overthrew you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, so that you became like a stump plucked from the burning; but you returned not to me, is Yahveh's oracle. 12. On this account, *thus* will I do to thee, O Israel. Because I will do *this* to thee, arm thyself against thy God, O Israel. 13. For, behold, the former of the mountains, and creator of the spirit, and

destroyed. The expression similar in Joel ii. 20. A victory of the Syrians is supposed; cf. especially 2 Kings xiii. 7. Ver. 11. 5. *Earthquake.* Here again a glance is cast at the earthquake, which is to be put between chs. ii. and iii., the latest terrible "catastrophe." The word is applied usually to the "overturning" of Sodom in Isa. i. 7. With great difficulty they saved their bare life, were like a half-burnt log snatched from the fire; cf. Zech. iii. 2. Ver. 12. Because all milder means of chastisement were useless, a severe one is now to come, which is not expressed here, but whose gravity is all the more emphatically intimated. God's majesty will be revealed in this judgment.—זאת points to something to follow, which, however, is not expressed. *Prepare thyself to meet thy God,* not to be reconciled to Him, but in self-defence. This time He will put forth all His strength; gather thyself together! The summons is ironical, as the suffix intimates: prepare thyself against—thy own God. Ver. 13. What kind of a God He is, and how sad, therefore, it is to have Him for an opponent, the poetical closing verse says. He is the Creator of the universe, the All-knowing, who tells man His unspoken thoughts (שְׂיחַ = שִׂיחַ, musing, secret murmuring).—According to the order of words: "makes morning light darkness," we might think of this, that when God would judge, He can again turn the glimmering day into cheerless night, perhaps by a swift-ascending storm, which again swallows up the scarcely dawning day (Ewald). According to ch. v. 8, we are rather to think of the daily miracle that God causes the morning light to issue out of deep darkness. In this case the usual order of words is abandoned (as in Ps. civ. 4), perhaps to avoid the hiatus עֹשֶׂה עֵיפָה.—God's majesty is seen, finally, in the beautiful trait: *who walks* . . . where the clouds, which veil the Lord's glory, form the visible substratum of the conception. He skirts only the lofty points of the earth, leaves

he who tells man what his thoughts are, he who turns darkness into dawn, and walks on the high places of the earth—Yahveh, God of hosts, is his name!

Exposition.

Contents of ch. iv. Second Threatening Discourse, the Accusation Aggravated. 1. Apostrophe to the Ladies of Samaria, vv. 1–3; 2. to the Children of Israel in general, vv. 4–13.

This second discourse opens with a withering accusation against the women in Samaria, similar to the invective directed against the women of Jerusalem by Isaiah, the younger contemporary of Amos, Isa. iii. 16 ff. If Isaiah especially finds fault with the vain women of his capital for their vanity, love of finery, and coquetry, Amos names as the worst thing going hand in hand with those evils—love of pleasure, which is quite insatiable in the respectable women, so that, in order to indulge their whims, they constantly plague their husbands with new demands at the cost of the poor and wretched (cf. ch. ii. 6 f.). How this world of high dames will be shaken out of the indulgent life, in which it is sunk, when the foe invests the city, and the pampered women will be glad if they are able to escape with bare life at any cost of toil and suffering! The investing foes are certainly the Assyrians, who are referred to in ch. vi. 14 as oppressing the whole land, and in ch. vi. 7, v. 27, as those who carry off the people beyond Damascus.

From ch. iv. 4 the reproof turns to the whole nation, and in particular strikes at its worship, which, as Amos and after him Hosea testifies, is already not the legal one as regards its

there His footsteps. On the form *bâmŏthē* (double plural ending), cf. Ges. § 87, 5, Anm. 1. The form appears first in Deut. xxxii. 13; cf. Job ix. 8; Micah i. 3.

form (place and ceremonial), but one arbitrarily constituted; and in view of the mercenary and selfish spirit which they bring to God's service, is mere sin. The bigotry with which they multiply and enrich the sacrificial rites, makes therefore the evil all the worse: the more they practise such worship, the more they sin. All the divine judgments that have fallen on them hitherto have not brought them back from such self-willed ways to their rightful Lord; neither famine (ver. 6) nor want of rain (ver. 7 f.), neither loss of harvest nor locust devastation (ver. 9), neither pestilence nor the calamities of war (ver. 10), have borne any fruit. Even the latest catastrophe, the terrible earthquake, which they have escaped with difficulty, has not really humbled their proud hearts. Now, let them learn what the Almighty can do whom they have so grievously sinned against; let them prepare for the worst (ver. 12 f.). The reference is to the judgment announced in ver. 2 f.

Third Threatening Discourse: Lament for Israel, Chs. v., vi.

V. 1. Hear ye this word, when I begin a *lament* over you, O house of Israel! 2. She is fallen, she shall not rise again, the virgin of Israel! She lies stretched along on her land, none raises her up again. 3. For thus says the Lord Yahveh: The city which goes forth with thousands shall

Chapter V.

Ver. 1. קינה, prophetic dirge over the nation, such as Ezekiel especially was accustomed to strike up over those against whom he had to prophesy, and who in a sense were already fallen victims to death. Ver. 2. בתולת י', cf. on Isa. i. 8. Her incorrigibleness calls for a doom, from which she will not recover. This verse sets the key of the lament. Ver. 3. Fearfully will the contingent of the Israelitish host be decimated in each several city. יצא, here as verb of flowing or fulness with accus., Ges. § 138, 1, Anm. 2. לבית י', properly,

have hundreds left, and she that goes forth with hundreds shall have ten left, of the house of Israel. 4. For thus says Yahveh to the house of Israel: Seek ye me and live! 5. But seek not Bethel, and come not to Gilgal, and pass not to Beersheba! For the rolling city (Gilgal) rolls thence, and the house of God (Bethel) comes to an utter end. 6. Seek ye Yahveh and live, that he may not come into the house of Joseph like fire, which consumes, without there being any one to quench it for Bethel. 7. Ye who change right to wormwood, and crush righteousness to the

belonging to the house of Israel. Ver. 4. *And live* = so shall you certainly live, Ges. § 130, 2. The living God opposes Himself to the idols, with whom they seek refuge (ver. 5). Ver. 5. *Bethel*, on ch. iii. 14. *Gilgal*, on Hos. iv. 15. Alongside these stands here also *Beersheba* as the place whither the pilgrims went (ch. viii. 14), and where the worship was no better. Like Bethel, the place was hallowed by patriarchal recollections. Cf. already Abraham, Gen. xxxi. 33! Gilgal, the rolling city, will roll on—paronomasia, such as Isaiah and Micah are specially fond of. Beth-El, God's house, becomes Beth-Aven. This it is already as idol-house, hence so called by Hosea (ch. iv. 15); but it becomes so also in another sense of אן, nothingness, *utter ruin*. Ver. 6. *Bethel* is specially named as the religious centre of the *house of Joseph*, i.e. of the northern kingdom. There at Bethel also the prophet preached, ch. vii. 10 ff. Ver. 7. Indignant apostrophe to the bad judges, who change the right, a gift of God, into the opposite, sweetness (Ps. xix. 10 f.) into bitterness. לענה, probably wormwood, frequently joined with ראש, poison (so in ch. vi. 12), symbolical phrase for bitter wrong. By twisting the right, and using God's just and wholesome ordinances in an evil, perverse way, they change the source of benefits into the opposite.—The righteousness, which they should support and enable to stand upright (ver. 15), they lay on the ground to be trampled on. Vv. 8, 9. A description of God follows, whereas in ver. 10 that of the unjust judges is continued. It seems natural with Ewald to make ver. 7 follow after ver. 9; but ver. 8 does not well join on to ver. 6. Such a break in the language may be understood in the prophet by supposing that he directs his gaze alternately at the transgressors in the land who forget all just law, and at the perfect God in His majesty, who must punish such crimes. Wellhausen would

ground!—8. He that created the Pleiades and Orion, and changes darkness into morning, and darkens day into night: who calls the waters of the sea, and pours them on the face of the earth—Yahveh his name! 9. Who causes destruction to flash on the strong, and destruction comes on the fenced city!—10. They hate him that reproves in the gate; and he that speaks the truth, him they abhor. 11. Therefore, because you trample on the poor man, and take corn-tax from him, you shall build houses of hewn stone, but shall not dwell therein; you shall plant vineyards for pleasure, but shall not drink their wine. 12. For I know,

deny vv. 8, 9, and in the same way ch. iv. 12 and ix. 6, to the prophet—without valid reason. Ver. 8 praises God as the Creator of the most splendid constellations, in order to recall the fact that He made the firmament, which is so wonderful for its grandeur and harmonious motions.—כימה, little crowd, is the distinctive name of the *Pleiades*, cf. Job ix. 9, xxxviii. 31, where alongside this also is *Orion*. כסיל, properly the fat one, fool, *i.e.* the plump Titan, who fights against God's wisdom, but is put in chains by it. We have here perhaps among the Semites essentially the same myth as among the Indo-Germans, who in this constellation saw a wild huntsman, corresponding somewhat to the Semitic Nimrod.—The shepherd Amos, like the poet of Job, is familiar with the constellations. Also God's conducting the regular interchange of day and night (cf. on iv. 13), sunshine and rain, shows His perfect wondrous power and harmoniously governing wisdom. How offensive the action of those perverters of right alongside this faultless government by inviolable laws to be read in the stars!

Ver. 9 reminds of God's judicial power. Like the dawn, He causes judgment to burst in a moment on the apparently secure. The city of Samaria is especially in view. Ver. 10. Cf. Hos. iv. 4. Ver. 11. The לכן, of which Amos is fond (cf. ch. iii. 11, iv. 12), is again taken up in v. 13, 16.—בושסכם, vulgar phrase for בוססכם, infin. Polel of בוס, to tread with the feet.—מַשְׂאֵת. This *corn-tax* is scarcely a bribe (so most expositors), rather a regularly received tithe, which the rich wish to take illegally from debtors. Taking interest was forbidden. The punishment is in accordance with Deut. xxviii. 30, later Zeph. i. 13. Before they can inhabit the houses built, or enjoy the vineyards planted, they die, or it all goes to ruin. Ver. 12. כֹּפְרֵי, they accept *hush-money* from the

many are your sins and mighty your offences, ye oppressors of the just man, who take hush-money, and bend the poor in the gate! 13. Therefore the prudent man is silent at this time; for it is an evil time. 14. Seek ye good, not evil, that you may live: and so Yahveh of hosts will be with you, as you say. 15. Hate ye evil, and love good, and see that right is established in the gate: perchance Yahveh, the God of hosts, will have mercy on the remnant of Joseph.

16. Therefore thus says Yahveh, the God of hosts, the Lord: In all public places wailing, and in every street they say: Alas, alas! and they call the husbandman to mourning; and to the skilful in mourning (they proclaim) mourning for the dead, 17. and in every vineyard wailing: for I walk about in thy midst, says Yahveh.

guilty instead of punishing them and protecting the poor whom they annoy; here therefore it is a bribe, by which one illegally escapes from merited punishment. Ver. 13. דמם, Kal, to keep quiet, be silent. This also is a sign of the judgment, that wise men no longer lift up their voice, as it is not listened to. The prophet, of course, must speak, even when regard to prudence forbids it. Ver. 14. Cf. ch. v. 4. God's assistance is bound to the condition that they keep His moral precepts. ואל־רע for ואל תדרשו רע. Now they wrongly comfort themselves with the thought of His nearness and help. Ver. 15. הציגו, opposite of הניחו, ver. 7.—אולי, cf. Joel ii. 14. At most it is now only the saving of a *remnant* of Joseph that can be hoped for, as the Syrian conquests have been made at the cost especially of the northern kingdom, in particular of the Josephite tribe of Manasseh, cf. 2 Kings x. 32 f. (Hitz.). Ver. 16 makes us see into the cities, where God the Lord (an unusual combination of the divine names) holds judgment, and indeed by a *pestilence* after the manner of Egypt (ch. iv. 10). הוֹ־הוֹ, as elsewhere הוֹי־הוֹי, Jer. xxii. 18.—The husbandman busy in the field is summoned to mourn for the dead, because death has suddenly entered his house. אל י' נ' ומספד, adapted in a very pregnant way to the previous construction: "and wailing to the skilful in funeral song," *i.e.* they proclaim; they appoint them thereto. The mourning women are meant, who augmented the mourning clamour; men might also take part in it; cf. the *αὐλητταί*, Matt. ix. 23. Ver. 17. From the *vineyards*, whence otherwise only sounds of

18. Woe to those who long for the "*Day of Yahveh!*" How now shall the day of Yahveh profit *you?* it is darkness and not light. 19. As if a man flees from a lion and a bear meets him; and he comes into the house: then he leans his hand on the wall, and a serpent bites him. 20. Is not the day of Yahveh darkness and not light, obscurity and no glimmer in it? 21. I hate, I reject your *feasts*, and I take no pleasure in your assemblies. 22. For when you offer burnt-offerings to me, I delight not, and in your meat-offerings (I delight not); and the peace-offering of your fatted calves I regard not. 23. Take away from me the noise of thy songs, and the music of thy harps I will

rejoicing proceed, one also hears wailing cries, as people are fetched thence to the dead, or rather those who die suddenly are lamented on the spot.—*I go about*, according to Ex. xii. 12, of the death-dealing going about of the angel of death. Ver. 18. יום יהוה in Obad. 15 and Joel i. 15. Those *longing* for the day of Yahveh are not scoffers, who challenge it because it is threatened so long and always delayed (so Ewald), but the so-called religious who promise themselves gain and honour from that day—in unhappy blindness, as that day can bring no good to such people (לכם, emphatic: what will it be to such people as you, namely, advantage), it can only be a day of darkness. Already Amos interprets the darkness more spiritually than Joel ii. 2. Ver. 19. Invoking on themselves the day of Yahveh because of the troubles of the present, they fall out of one danger into a worse, yea, go to meet certain destruction, like one who, escaping from a lion, runs on a bear; and after he has luckily fled into the house, here, where he thinks himself safe and (perhaps in sitting down) leans his hand on the wall, is bitten by a serpent in it. Thus inevitable destruction is united with the day of Yahveh. Ver. 21 ff. Parallels to Isa. i. 11 ff.—הֵרִיחַ with בְּ, as in Isa. xi. 3. Ver. 22. Usually ומנחתיכם, is wrongly joined with the foregoing; with לא ארצה it forms a second member the shelamim, a third. שלם, here only sing., communion, friendship, hence fellowship-offering, expressive of communion with God, a third class alongside burnt and meat offerings; cf. Herzog, xi. 48 f. Ver. 23. God forbids in drastic fashion the continuance of the musical drawl in worship: Take it away from me! מעלי, as a burden lying on him, cf. Isa. i. 14

not hear. 24. And now let justice flow down like water, and righteousness like an unfailing brook. 25. Did you then offer to me sacrifices and meat-offerings forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? 26. So you shall carry Sacuth,* your king, and Kewan,* your star-god,*

of the feasts, היו עלי לטרה נלאיתי נשא. Ver. 24. Not to be taken as menacing (so Hitz., König, *Hauptprobl.* p. 9, Bredenk., *Ges. u. Pr.* 83 f. *et al.*), but according to vv. 7, 15. Let justice and righteousness flow abundantly (יִגַּל, imperf. Niph., properly roll) like a perpetual stream, not capriciously, soon drying up. Instead of bringing sacrifices in plenty, let them cause righteousness to spring forth as abundantly. Ver. 25. Interrogative sentence (ה, interrog. with dag. f., Ges. § 100, 4, Anm.), which without doubt expects a negative answer. It is clearly assumed that during the forty years in the desert the sacrificial rites were largely out of use, which is intelligible, as the field products were wanting for the מִנְחָה, and even for the sacrifices the necessary number of beasts was not at hand. That no sacrifice was ever offered, the prophet certainly does not mean to say. It is true זבחים ומנחה may refer to all bloody and unbloody offerings. But the prophet has especially the freewill offerings in mind, less the עוֹלוֹת of the entire congregation. Still less does he wish to describe the sacrifices as something recently come into vogue. Only those forty exceptional years, when the sacrificial service was in great part suspended, are mentioned as such. Why does he make this confession? He would thereby prove that God can dispense with them now as He did once before. (Cf. how God could also dispense with a dwelling according to 2 Sam. vii. 6 f.) They must not therefore dream that He will not reject them because of these ceremonial services to which He alludes.

Ver. 26 is to be connected with this inner motive of the question in ver. 25, not with the question itself, as if they had so acted then in the wilderness; so doubtless LXX (Acts vii. 42), Hitz., Oehler (*Alt. Theol.* p. 105), Bredenk. *et al.* Rightly Ewald, Schrader, König: "So shall you then carry away" . . .; only thus does ver. 27 follow naturally. סִכּוּת, taken by Massoretes, LXX, and moderns appellatively "case" (portable baldachin), is rather a proper name of the Assyrian god Adar=Melech=Saturn, and to be read סַכּוּת (not of Semitic origin); just so כִּיּוּן, "stand," likewise no longer understood by the Massoretes and taken appellatively, from כּוּן,

your images,* which you manufactured for yourselves; 27. and I will cause you to be carried away far beyond Damascus, says Yahveh, whose name is the God of hosts.

VI. 1. Woe to you that are of cheerful heart in Zion, and that are without care on Samaria's mountain, the choice ones of the first-fruit of the nations, and to whom the house of Israel is wont to come.—2. Pass over to Calneh, and see;

Piel, to set up, establish, is a surname of the same god, and to be read כַּיְוָן, Kaivân, Kêwan; so the star Saturn is called in Arabic. LXX, Ῥαιφάν (a corruption of this is Ῥεμφάν), which perhaps arose out of Ῥαιφάν (so also Syr.). From the appellative view of כיון follows in the Hebr. text a transposing of the original order of the words, which we can largely restore after LXX: ונשאתם את סכות מלככם ואת כיון כוכב אלהיכם צלמיכם אשר ע' ל' (LXX reads צַלְמֵיהֶם, and puts its Ῥαιφάν after τὸ ἄστρον τοῦ θεοῦ ὑμῶν). See on the passage Schrader, vol. ii. 141, and especially the proofs in *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* 1874, p. 324 ff. — Although the possibility that star-worship existed in Israel even in the Mosaic days (cf. Deut. iv. 19, xvii. 3) is not to be absolutely denied, such worship, and indeed Assyrian planet-worship, is still more probable in the prophet's days. Without doubt it had penetrated into the northern kingdom before the time of Ahaz; cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 5, 12 with xvi. 3. The prophet threatens the nation that, as it bore about its gods in procession (cf. נשא, Isa. xlv. 20, xlvi. 1; Jer. x. 1), so it must drag them into exile, cf. Hos. x. 6. Ver. 27. מהלאה ל' properly, from farward, in reference to Damascus, *i.e.* in the direction lying beyond Damascus. Plainly the *Assyrian* exile is meant.

Chapter VI.

Ver. 1. The second cry of Woe, still belonging to the mourning strain (ch. v. 1), corresponds to the first, ch. v. 18. Israel is called "first-fruit of the nations," according to ver. 2, not simply ironically, but in rank; it is the nobility of mankind. But those addressed are themselves distinguished among this people by rank and dignity. How great their responsibility! Their high position is indicated in the subordinate clause, which states that the house of Israel goes to them for counsel, justice, and help. Ver. 2. *Calneh*, the later Ctesiphon on the Tigris (cf. Isa. x. 9).—*Hamath* (Isa. x. 9; Ezek.

and go from thence to Hamath the great, and go down to Gath of the Philistines: are they better than these kingdoms, or is their territory wider than yours?—3. Who would chase away the evil day, and bring near the seat of injustice! 4. Who lie down on couches of ivory, and stretch themselves on their divans, and feast on lambs from the flock and

xlvii. 16), later Epiphania on the Orontes. The translation, "Are *you* better than those kingdoms, or *rather* is not their territory greater than yours?" would well suit the context. But apart from the fact that the latter could never be said of Gath, this translation (supplying אַתֶּם) cannot be justified grammatically, but we must translate as above, so that "these kingdoms" (cf. ch. ix. 8) refers to Israel and Judah. In this case it justifies ראשית גוים: they may rest satisfied that those proud cities have no such stately kingdom as Israel owes to its God. The mention of these three cities is intelligible, if they had passed the prime of their strength and their kingdom was on the decline. This applies to Gath in a high degree, see on ch. i. 8. Calneh seems to have forfeited its early independence, and to have been incorporated in the Assyrian empire. Hamath, which at a later time quite gave in to the Assyrians (on Isa. x. 9), had already lost much of its old power (already conquered by Salmanassar II., 853 B.C., Sayce, *Fresh Light*, etc., p. 129), which is clear even from the obscure passage 2 Kings xiv. 28, where it takes a secondary position in relation to Israel and Judah, cf. Sayce, p. 133. The passage does not imply that a catastrophe had fallen on the three cities just now, so that there is no sufficient reason for erasing the verse as an interpolation, like Schrader, vol. ii. 144, with whom Bickell agrees on metrical grounds (see there). Abrupt transitions are not uncommon in Amos. Ver. 3. Form as in ch. v. 7. They abuse God's goodness and forbearance to encourage careless security. In opposition to the "pious" pessimists, ch. v. 18, these are the optimistic epicureans, who expel the unhappy day of doom from their thoughts in order to revel with greater freedom. The farther they put off from them the throne of the heavenly Judge, the nearer they bring that of unrighteousness. Ver. 4. The *lying* at table (and that on divans inlaid with ivory) appears here as excessive refinement. It only became general among the Jews at a later time, whereas the early Israelites sat at table (1 Sam. xx. 24). סרחים also paints the wanton indulgence. This at least may be disturbed by the

calves from the stall! 5. Who troll to the sound of the harp; like David they have invented for themselves instruments of song! 6. Who drink from sacrificial bowls full of wine, and anoint themselves with the choicest oil, and grieve not for the overthrow of Joseph! 7. Therefore shall they now go into captivity at the head of the captives, and the laughter of those lying at ease shall cease.

8. The Lord Yahveh has sworn by his soul: Thus says Yahveh, the God of hosts, I abhor the pomp of Jacob, and hate his palaces; and deliver up the city with all that is therein. 9. And it shall come to pass, if ten men shall be left in one house, they die. 10. And when his kinsman and he that buries him carries him away in order to take

message of doom. Even the eating of the tenderest and artificially fattened animals of the flock without festal occasion seems to the shepherd, who is accustomed to simple conditions, a luxury and almost a barbarity. Ver. 5. פרט, to twaddle, troll, used here of empty, worthless singing.—הנבל, see on Isa. v. 12.—*As David . . .* ironical comparison. They invent new singing instruments, *i.e.* to accompany singing, like David the great master of Hebrew music. But their skill ministers only to idle diversion. The notice is important, because it shows how proverbial David's art was even in the days of Amos. We only read of his inventing instruments elsewhere in the apocryphal addition to the Psalter in LXX. Ver. 6. They use large measures, *drink* from goblets large and wide enough to be *sacrificial bowls* for receiving the blood. They *anoint themselves* with the finest oils in these revels. שבר, see on Jer. iv. 6 (*Comm. on Jer.*), the calamity fatal to the State, the ruin which has not yet set in, but is announced in the prophet's message. Ver. 7. מרזח ס׳, word-play; st. absol. מִרְזַח (Jer. xvi. 5), used here of yells of joy. Ver. 8. Sworn, cf. on ch. iv. 2.—מתאב for מתעב.—The *pride of Jacob*, objectively the object of their pride, see on Hos. v. 5.—והסגרתי, not "I shut up," which would make ומלאה needless, but "to deliver up, hand over," as in Obad. 14. Ver. 9 f. depicts the effect of the fearful judgment, and indeed of the pestilence, cf. ch. v. 16 f. Of ten still remaining inmates of a house none shall escape. Ten men in a house is a great number. A numerous family here hopes to survive the judgment, but in vain. Ver. 10. The suff. in ונשאו applies indefinitely to such a dead man. According to what follows the last but one in the house is

the bones from the house, and he says to him who is behind in the house, "Is there yet any one with thee?" and he says, "All is over"—he cries, "Hush!" that no one may even mention the name of Yahveh!—11. For behold, Yahveh will command, and the great house is smitten into ruins, and the small house into rents. 12. Will horses run on the rock, or will one plough the sea* with oxen? For you have changed right into poison, and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood. 13. Ye who take delight in worthlessness, who say, "Have we not won horns for ourselves by our strength?" 14. For behold, I will

meant. דודו, not exactly uncle, but the next of kin outside the house, to whom the duty of burial belongs. מסרפו for מישרפו. In case of plague, cremation, which is otherwise interdicted, must be resorted to. See on ch. ii. 1, where, however, the emphasis lies on the fact that the bones are ground to dust. The last one crouches still in a corner, also already sick; he gives the gloomy answer: אפס! The former checks his speech, fearing lest he should say: "Yahveh has carried them away," as the custom perhaps was in announcing death of this kind. The monitor would rather not hear this name uttered; such sacred terror has he of it. כי לא ל׳, properly, "namely in order not to mention," in the sense that one ought not to mention. The emphasis of the whole verse rests on these last words (ואמור הם׳), which give a vivid sense of the terribleness of the judgment. It takes much to inspire the present frivolous generation with such fear of God! Ver. 11. Yahveh will command and smite = at His command they will smite; the same construction as in ch. ix. 9. והכה, with indefinite neuter subject.—By the *great and small house*, Hitzig understands palace and hut. It is better referred to Israel and Judah (cf. ch. ix. 11). The Assyrians, in fact, broke up the former and shattered the latter. Ver. 12. Read בַּבָּקָר יָם, according to J. D. Michaelis and recent writers. They have betaken themselves to an element which will bring them as little good as the rock to the rider or the sea to the ploughman; they have left the ground of right. Ver. 13. Thus this hope and confidence is without object and substance. It is put in a no-thing, *i.e.* having no substance, namely their own strength, to which they think they owe the growth of the Israelitish power (the "obtaining of horns") under Jeroboam II. Ver. 14. The *ultima ratio*, which God uses in chastising His

raise up against you, O house of Israel, is the oracle of Yahveh, the God of hosts, a nation which shall distress you from the way to Hamath up to the willow-brook.

Exposition.

Contents of chs. v., vi. Third Threatening Discourse. Lament for Israel. 1. It falls a prey to destruction through the numbers of the unrighteous, who make recovery impossible, ch. v. 1–15; 2. The Hypocrites will not escape the judgment, ch. v. 16–27; 3. The Heads of the nation, who revel in security, provoke the judgment, ch. vi.

This third discourse, in the beginning and to some extent still further, is in an elegiac strain. Because the prophet sees the ruin coming as certainly as if it were already fact, he sings the dirge of his people. And yet even here it is no inevitable fate which he has to proclaim. Just here, on the contrary, the call to repent goes forth repeatedly and urgently. If even now they would practise goodness instead of unrighteousness, the way to life would still lie open to them (ch. v. 4, 6, 14 f.). Only first of all the shameless perversion of right must come to an end, which is described in ch. v. 7, 10 ff., in similar terms to those of ch. ii. 6 ff. and elsewhere, as oppression and ill-usage of the defenceless and poor, while their defenders are hated and persecuted (ver. 13). Only on complete repentance could they comfort themselves with the help of their God (ver. 14), whose relation to this people is

people, is the content of a *ceterum censco* of the prophet; cf. ch. iii. 11, v. 27. A worse foe, nowhere yet mentioned by name, but not to be mistaken, will oppress the land of Israel in the widest extent.—*From the direction to Hamath*, cf. the similar statement in the oracle of Jonah about Jeroboam II., 2 Kings xiv. 25 and Ezek. xlvii. 16. The southern limit is the *willow-brook* (2 Kings xiv. 25, the ים הערבה), a brook falling into the Dead Sea, probably identical with the one named in Isa. xv. 7; see there.

thus morally conditioned. If they persist in their present course, ignoring God and duty, death will come on them as a retribution, here (ver. 16 f.) appearing in the form of a dreadful pestilence. Ch. v. 18 ff. is directed against a new class of the nation, or at least against a new aspect of the hypocrisy which has been already rebuked, ver. 14. As these self-righteous ones boasted wrongly of a claim to divine help, ver. 14, so without sufficient reason they comforted themselves with the future hopes kindled by the prophets among God's people, which hopes will be fulfilled according to Obadiah's hint and Joel's exposition by the Day of Yahveh, when Yahveh will reckon with the heathen nations in favour of His own people. The great earthquake (ch. i. 1) perhaps led to the expectation of this day of universal judgment coming speedily; in any case, many deceived themselves with the fervent hope that the day would soon appear! To the self-deceit, which had a part in this longing for the judgment, applies the Woe! of the seer. It was nothing but weariness and hatred of the world, born of sickly self-love, which inspired them with the wish, whose fulfilment would bring them inevitable destruction instead of the greatness and glory they looked for. Or do they think to secure God's goodwill by their costly worship? How much, on the contrary, this offends God, we learn in ver. 21 ff. as in Isa. i. 10 ff.; and how indifferent to Him are these acts of homage, with which they would fain atone for the neglect of justice and righteousness, Amos proves in ver. 25 by the memory of the long period of desert-wandering. So God can still to-day do without their sacrifices, and He will cause them to go with their idols, ver. 26, beyond Damascus (into the land of Assyria), ver. 27.

In ch. vi. 1 ff. the judicial survey turns again to the enjoyers of life, and this time to the high-placed revellers in the chief cities. One would think that, in such serious days, when God's strict justice is making itself felt in the land in

word and deed, the heads of the nation in Zion and Samaria, conscious of their high responsibility, would be in bitter grief for the approaching destruction of their nation, and would not cease prayer and fasting. So at least the plain, unsophisticated countryman pictured to himself the fathers of the nation, whom he used to approach with reverence and holy fear. And now how different their life behind their proud walls! There nothing is seen of sorrow for the overthrow of Joseph. What couches in their gorgeous chambers, what cooking, what goblets, what merry tinkling in their never-ceasing revels! How they riot in wine and perfume with unbridled mirth! If these are the heads of the God-chosen and God-blessed nation, let them go into exile at its head; then there will be peace in the land.—But all the powers of judgment co-operate in the retribution. And with his peculiar gift for picturing the horrible, the seer in ch. vi. 9 f. gives us a glimpse into the dwellings emptied by the pestilence and now still as death, forming a fearful contrast to the merry chambers described in ver. 4 ff.—This will be the fruit of the defiant self-confidence with which they have been filled by the high position attained in the last days (under Jeroboam II.). Under the blows of an unnamed, powerful nation (Assyria) their newly-grown horns will be quickly broken.

Two Warning Visions and One Threatening Vision, Ch. vii.

VII. 1. Thus the Lord Yahveh showed me; and, behold, he formed *locusts* at the beginning when the after grass shot forth,—and, behold, the after grass follows on the king's

Chapter VII.

Ver. 1. This *locust plague* belongs merely to the vision of the seer; but the prospect of it is certain, and it is only turned aside by his intercession.—Yahveh is subj. to יוצר. Who else could form these creatures? Cf. also ch. iii. 6. גֹּבַי, not plur.

mowings.—2. And it came to pass, when they had utterly devoured the grass of the earth, I said, Lord Yahveh, forgive, I pray! How should Jacob be able to stand erect? for he is small. 3. Yahveh repented in respect to this: It shall not take place, Yahveh said.—4. Thus the Lord Yahveh showed me; and, behold, the Lord Yahveh called to contend by *fire*, that it might consume the great flood, and it consumed the soil. 5. Then I said, Lord Yahveh, cease, I pray! How should Jacob be able to stand upright? for he is small. 6. Yahveh repented in respect to this: This also shall not take place, the Lord Yahveh said.—7. Thus he showed me; and, behold, the Lord stood on a perpendicular wall, and had a *plumb-line* in his hand. 8. Then Yahveh said to me, What seest thou, Amos? And I said, A plumb-line. Then the

of גּוֹב, but collect. sing. for גָּבַי.—לקש, the late grass springing up in summer, on which the peasants relied for their own needs, as the early mowings had to be given to the king for his numerous horses and mules. Ver. 2. אִם, here quite in temporal sense. The prophet assumes that the plague is a punishment.—מִי as in Isa. li. 19. The blow to the diminished power of the nation from such a famine would be too heavy. It would be to the gain of neighbouring nations. Ver. 3. *Yahveh repented*, see on Joel ii. 2, which passage was probably present to the mind of Amos. זאת refers to the visitation intended by Yahveh. Ver. 4. As no change of mind has taken place in Israel, Yahveh again prepares to send a plague, as the seer knows: He calls on burning heat as an avenging power, *i.e.* sends such drought that even the great flood beneath the earth, which feeds the earth with springs (Gen. xlix. 25), is consumed by it. Properly, *He called to contend*, namely with His people, *by means of fire*. Really the fire is called on, but it is put in connection with the other verb.—החלק (cf. the *nomen unit.* ch. iv. 7), the divided, and therefore cultivated ground. Ver. 7. נצב, partic. Niphal, intimates the position, ובידו א׳ an important circumstance. Ver. 8. Question and answer led the seer to take account of what he saw before he received the declaration thereupon. That the latter only follows, occasionally after the seer has expressly confessed his want of understanding (Zech. i. 8, iv. 4 f., 12 f. and elsewhere), shows that he is not the intellectual author of the image, and merely clothes his own

Lord said, Behold, I apply the plumb-line amid my people Israel: I will not continue to pass it by. 9. And the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel lie waste; and I will arise with the sword against the house of Jeroboam.

10. Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to Jeroboam the king of Israel, and told him: "Amos is scattering conspiracy against thee amid the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. 11. For thus has Amos said, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall certainly go away into exile from his land." 12. And Amaziah said to Amos, "Seer, go, flee now to the land of Judah, and there eat thy bread, and there thou mayest prophesy. 13. But at Bethel thou shalt not continue to prophesy; for this is a

thoughts in it, but the image itself, and consequently the thought, primarily stand over against him as another's.—*A wall of plumb-line* = a perpendicular wall. A *plummet* or plumb-line comes into account here in regard to its use in taking down buildings or portions of them; cf. 2 Kings xxi. 13 and on Isa. xxxiv. 11. As the lead is used *within the house*, instead of as elsewhere in actual practice in determining certain projections outside, which are to fall, the whole is destined to fall. עבר, used here, in a different sense from ch. v. 17, of passing by in forbearance. Ver. 9. Cf. as to the matter, ch. iii. 14. *High places of Isaac*, as in ver. 16 house of Isaac for variety.—*And I arise* . . . raise myself up against, sword in hand, as avenger. Ver. 10. *Amaziah* was chief priest at Bethel.—כול, Hiphil, as in Joel ii. 11. The meaning is: In his discourses he strikes in so sharply and touches such tender strings that serious disturbances of peace and loyalty are to be feared. Ver. 11. The worst thing in the discourses is intimated in a sharpened personal form: "Jeroboam will die by the sword;" whereas, in ver. 9, Jeroboam's house was spoken of. In regard to the exile the denunciation is correct, cf. especially ch. v. 6, vi. 7, vii. 17. Ver. 12. *Eat there thy bread*, find there thy support, namely by prophesying. Ver. 13. *Bethel* was the chief sanctuary, and the proper national sanctuary, of the northern kingdom. What was said at this religious centre, where the king himself worshipped, had all the more weight; in the present case the menaces against throne and altar must have produced special excitement

royal sanctuary, and it is a royal palace." 14. Then Amos replied, and said to Amaziah, "Truly I am no prophet, nor am I a prophet's son; but I am a shepherd and sycamore-planter." 15. Then Yahveh took me from behind the flock, and Yahveh said to me, Go, prophesy to my people Israel. 16. And now hear the word of Yahveh: Thou sayest, "Thou shalt not prophesy respecting Israel, nor preach to the house of Isaac! 17. Therefore Yahveh has thus said: Thy wife shall play the harlot in the city, and thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword, and thy land be distributed with the measuring-line; and thou shalt die on unclean ground: and Israel shall certainly go away into exile from his land."

Exposition.

Contents of ch. vii. Two Warning Visions and one Threatening Vision. 1. First Warning Vision, vv. 1–3; 2. Second Warning Vision, vv. 4–6; 3. The Threatening Vision, vv. 7–9; 4. An Epilogue: encounter with Amaziah, vv. 10–17.

there. Ver. 14. Like נָבִיא, used in an official sense, בֶּן־נָבִיא is not "son of a prophet," but disciple of a prophet, such as gathered round a distinguished prophet as a sort of order with a view to something of the prophetic gift passing over to them. On the contrary, by calling he was a *shepherd* (see on ch. i. 1) and sycamore-grower. These trees, flourishing on arid soil, bear poor figs, which need to be slit in order to be of use. This slitting is here called בָּלַס, denom. of a subst. בֶּלֶס; cf. Arabic *balas*, fig. Ver. 15. No resistance availed, ch. iii. 8. He was sent by God to the *people of Israel*, and must therefore address himself to them in the centre of the land. God has the right to speak to the people, who are *His* property; and He will have this testified in that centre of the apostasy. Ver. 16. נטף, Hiphil, properly to make to trickle, drop (cf. in proper sense, ch. ix. 13), namely words, hence used of "flowing" discourse, along with הנבא also in Ezek. xxi. 2, 7; cf. Micah ii. 6, 11.—*House of Isaac*, ver. 9. Ver. 17. *Thy wife* . . . is put to shame, perhaps by the enemy (Zech. xiv. 2).—*On unclean ground*, *i.e.* in a heathen land, where even the ground, which one wishes for a grave, lacks sacredness.

This chapter opens the second half of the book, which is composed of visions, as the first half is of discourses. The visions are also of a menacing character and partially (chs. viii., ix.) accompanied by considerable discourses, which explain their contents like the preceding ones, until in ch. ix. the threatening finally turns into promise.—The time, when these visions were seen, is about the same as that of the discourses. Cf. ch. viii. 8, where the earthquake mentioned in ch. i. 1 is scarcely foretold; rather the prophet alludes to this event as precursor of the general judgment, which will bring yet other terrors along with it.—In ch. vii. 9 ff. it is assumed that Jeroboam is still reigning.

The first two visions (ch. vii. 1–6) show the seer the approach of the plagues, which make him anxious and lead him to intercede earnestly for the welfare, yea the very existence, of the nation: a locust invasion and burning heat, both aggravated in the highest degree. At the prophet's earnest intercession both are revoked by God, and the matter goes no further than the threat.—It is otherwise with the third vision, ver. 7 ff., which threatens a more radical judgment, and that irrevocably; the house of Israel itself has the Lord doomed to destruction, as His appearance with the plumb-line in His hand shows. In particular its sanctuaries will be laid waste, and its royal house fall by the sword. This third, worst visitation, which the Lord does not recall, is the same which forms the *ultima ratio* also in the discourses, to which the Lord will have recourse with His incorrigible people,—the Assyrian catastrophe; cf. above, ch. iv. 2, v. 5, 27, vi. 7, 14, vii. 9.

This last, plainest oracle, which spared not even the royal house, brought to a head the anger long cherished against Amos by certain persons of high station, as is related in a historical appendix. Amaziah, the chief priest at Bethel, denounced the daring speaker, whose discourses were not without effect on the people, to King Jeroboam as a traitor

dangerous to the State, as he disturbed the peace of the land, never ceasing to deliver injurious speeches against king and nation, in which he threatened the former with death by the sword, and the latter with loss of its country as a divinely-willed fate. Jeroboam, however, does not seem to have proceeded to violent measures, whether from fear of the people (as Herod, Matt. xiv. 5), or because he thought the fanatic harmless. Amaziah therefore tried to get rid of the unwelcome guest by half-kindly, half-menacing means, giving him the "well-meant" advice to withdraw to his own country, where he could pursue his calling as prophet undisturbed, and so earn his bread; whereas at Bethel, as a royal sanctuary, it was unbecoming to speak so openly against throne and altar. In the first place, it is significant here with what emphasis this sanctuary is declared to be a royal one. The monarchy is the chief matter by which worship and prophecy are to be controlled. Whereas David felt himself entirely the servant of Yahveh, and never ventured to describe the temple at Jerusalem as royal; whereas, further, he always met the words of the prophets, even when they rebuked him most sharply, with the greatest reverence,—in the northern kingdom the entire system of worship was from the first a State religion governed by political considerations, and as the first Jeroboam's religious arrangements were dictated by political views, so they were maintained by force. Just as significant, secondly, is the fact that the priest sees in the prophetic office only a means of livelihood. He judges everything by the base motives, which are all he knows, and which are supreme to him. The idea of the true divine word, with its sovereign power unaffected by human regards and its irresistible constraint (ch. iii. 8), is altogether beyond him. To these two perversities Amos replies, ver. 14 f.: he is no prophet by profession, but has found his support otherwise as shepherd and peasant. But without his consent the Lord has made him a prophet, and sent him to His people. It is

not for him, therefore, to choose, whether and where and how he shall prophesy; how could he withstand his God? Because Amaziah by his prohibition has exposed his utter disregard of the divine word, whose bearer Amos is, he must learn the power of this word in himself. He becomes the object of a special threatening oracle which embraces also his family, like Shebna, Isa. xxii. 15 ff., or Pashur, who ill-treated Jeremiah, Jer. xx. 3 f. Of the fulfilment of this oracle nothing is known; but see Orelli's *Comm. on Isaiah*, p. 134.

The Fourth Vision, Ch. viii.

VIII. 1. Thus the Lord Yahveh showed me; and behold a basket *full of summer fruit.* 2. And he said: What seest thou, Amos? Then I said: A basket full of summer fruit. Then said Yahveh to me: Ripeness is come to my people Israel: I will no longer continue to pass it by. 3. And the palace-songs shall howl on the same day, is the oracle of the Lord Yahveh: many are the corpses; in every place they are thrown down. Hush!—4. Hear this, ye that catch at the

Chapter VIII.

Ver. 1. קַיִץ, properly summer time, harvest time; here transferred to ripe fruit. Ver. 2. A word-play is intended on קַיִץ and קֵץ (from קָצַץ, to cut off; here a violent end); cf. Joel iv. 13, and, as to the phrase, Ezek. vii. 2, 3, 6.—The end of the verse as in ch. vii. 8. Ver. 3. The merry *songs* (ch. vi. 5 f.) of the *palace* (not temple) turn into the opposite, mourning for the dead (cf. ver. 10 and ch. v. 16 f.). The idea is similar to the one in ch. vi. 9 f., and is just as enigmatically expressed. So *many* are the *corpses* that they are *thrown down* anywhere. The cry, *Hush*, as in ch. vi. 10; here, however, the reference may be to a feeling of languor, which will not even let one mourn, just as in severe diseases persons fall into apathy, and have no desire even to speak. Ver. 4. They snatch at the little gains of the poor man, and so at his whole existence.—ולשבית for ולהשבית; cf. on the construction, Ges. § 132, Anm. 1.—Instead of עֲנִיֵּי, *Keri*, עֲנִיֵּי, needlessly. Both words spring from ענה, to be bowed

poor, and go forth to destroy the still ones in the land, 5. saying, "When will the new moon be past?—then will we deal in corn; and the Sabbath?—then will we open grain: to make the bushel small, and the shekel great, and to falsify balances of deceit; 6. to procure the poor for money, and the needy for a pair of shoes; and we will sell refuse of grain for corn."—7. Yahveh has sworn by the pride of Jacob: Truly, I will never forget all their deeds. 8. Must not the earth

down; yet עֲנִי refers more to the physical state (poor, wretched, slight), ענו more to the spirit (harmless, humble, meek). Yet for the most part that class is meant which is found in a depressed position socially, and on this account is characterised by humility and inoffensiveness before the rich and powerful. Ver. 5. From שֶׁבֶר, corn, the Hiphil is formed. They cannot wait till new-moon and Sabbath are past to begin their corn-dealing again, with the intention (לְ) to make the bushel, with which they measure out, *very small*, and the weight, with which they weigh the money received, *very great*.—*And to bend balances of deceit*, *i.e.* in a treacherous way to make the balances wrong. Ver. 6. By such dishonest trading they would reduce the poor to slavery. The verse runs quite like ch. ii. 6; only that here the judges are outside the game, and the sellers are referred to as creditors, into whose hands the poor fall, as they cannot pay such exorbitant prices, and are dealt with in strictest justice.—Here, where trade is spoken of as a means of livelihood, it is apparent that *a pair of shoes* is a proverbial phrase for insignificant value.—The *refuse* of corn, the chaff which an honest dealer throws away, they measure out as grain. All this, of course, they do not say openly, but think it in secret. Ver. 7. The *pride of Jacob*, according to ch. vi. 8, is not God Himself, as many expositors suppose, so that God would swear by Himself, as in ch. vi. 8, iv. 2; but He swears this time by that which is the highest thing to them; see on Hos. v. 5. Ver. 8. On account of such outrage, *must not the earth itself rise up*, unwilling to bear it any longer, and then again *collapse* under the fearful burden of guilt? Its motion is compared to the swelling and sinking of the Nile-river. Certainly the allusion is to the earthquake still vividly remembered: It is no wonder that the earth itself rises up in indignation. The consequence of the terrible natural event is given by ואבל, cf. ch. ix. 5.—באר, syncopated from כִּיאֹר; cf. ch. ix. 5, after which passage ונשקה also for ונשקעה (Keri).—גרש, Niphal, to be driven

tremble for such things, so that all despair who dwell thereon? And it mounts up like the Nile-river at once, and is swollen, and sinks like the river of Egypt.—9. And it shall come to pass on that day, is the oracle of the Lord Yahveh, that I make the sun go down at noon, and darken the earth in bright day. 10. And I turn your feasts to mourning, and all your songs to wailing; and I bring sackcloth on all loins, and baldness on all heads; and make it mourn as for an only son, and its remotest end as on an evil day.—11. Behold, days come, is the oracle of the Lord Yahveh, that I send a famine on the land; not a famine of bread, nor thirst for water, but of hearing Yahveh's words. 12. And they shall totter from sea to sea, and from north to east wander about to seek the word of Yahveh, and shall not find it. 13. On that day the

up, swollen; cf. Isa. lvii. 20. Ver. 9. The day of the Lord dark, according to Joel ii. 2, iv. 15, already. Hitzig, following J. D. Michaelis, suggests the darkening of the sun on Feb. 9, 784 B.C., which reached its mean soon after 1 o'clock in Jerusalem; and thinks that it was not orally foretold, but that the literary revision glanced back at it. But no mere darkening of the sun is here announced, but the day of the Lord, accompanied with obscuring of the sun. If a recent event of the kind affected the description, it came into account at most as a presage, like Joel's locust-swarm. Ver. 10. *Sackcloth*, mourning garb; see Ezek. vii. 18.—*Baldness*, also a sign of mourning; see on Jer. xvi. 6.—The suff. in ושמתיה applies to the land, which shall mourn like a mother mourning for an only son (יחיד אבל, genit. obj.); cf. the analogous figure in Joel i. 8, and the same as here in Zech. xii. 10.—אחריתה, the hindmost, best protected part of the land; cf. ch. iv. 2. On the construction it is to be noted that כְּ is properly substantival: I set her in likeness of, etc. Ver. 11. שלח, Hiphil, as in Ezek. xiv. 13 and elsewhere, with general calamities as object. Ver. 12. נוּעַ; see on ch. iv. 8. From *sea to sea*, compared with ch. vi. 14, is to be understood of the western (*i.e.* Mediterranean) and the Dead Sea, which latter formed the southern limit of the northern kingdom; hence north and east are to be added to these. They will then seek the now despised word of God spoken by the prophets for comfort and safety, but in vain. Ver. 13. By *thirst*, both physical and moral suffering is meant. Because Yahveh no longer vouchsafes to them His

fair virgins and the youths shall be powerless for thirst—
14. who swear by the iniquity of Samaria, and say: "As truly as thy god lives, O Dan!" and, "By the way to Beersheba!" and shall fall down and not rise again.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. viii. The Fourth Vision. 1. The Basket of Ripe Fruit, and its Interpretation, vv. 1–3; 2. Accompanying Discourse, vv. 4–14: *a.* Accusation, vv. 4–6; *b.* Judgment, vv. 7–14.

The most simple, symbolical vision, ver. 1, which sets a basket with ripe fruit before the eyes of the seer, and is interpreted in brief words of the speedy reaping of judgment in Israel (ver. 2 f.), gives occasion for a longer discourse of the same character as the former ones, but illustrating one point of the accusation with special vividness, and emphasising several features of the judgment in a peculiar way. In the first respect, in vv. 4–6, the avaricious Jewish corn-dealers are graphically pictured, in a typical way, for many in later centuries. The trade remained, so far as it concerned foreign parts, mainly in ancient Israel, in the hands of the Midianites

refreshing word of life, they sink in impotence, fall victims to death in the bloom of youthful strength and beauty. Ver. 14. The angry apostrophe, of which Amos is fond, with partic.—*By the iniquity of Samaria* they swear, *i.e.* by the god or idol-image of Samaria; by which that of Bethel, as the chief sanctuary, is meant, Hos. viii. 5 f., cf. x. 5. But they would have done better to call this god the iniquity of the land (Hos. x. 8), as the prophet does without ceremony.—At *Dan* stands the second North-Israelite sanctuary. The "god" of that place is also an ox-image since Jeroboam I., according to 1 Kings xii. 29 f.; such an image seems to have been set up there early in the judges' time. *By the way to Beersheba* (see on ch. v. 5) is a third oath. The pilgrimage to this shrine seems to have been in specially high reputation, and hence to have been made an instrument of swearing, as Mohammedans quite commonly swear "by the pilgrimage" (to Mecca).

and Phœnicians ("Canaanite," hence = merchant!). The trade in corn and other native products of the soil was an exception, which remained naturally in the hands of the nation. In this trade in the necessaries of life, which even the poor could not dispense with, that insatiable and inexorable avarice came to light in the prophet's day which only too easily takes possession of this nation in such business concerns. This sordid covetousness and hardness of heart so angers the Lord that He sends down the heaviest judgments. Earthquakes (ver. 8) and darkness of the sun (ver. 9) announce His day. The whole land is cast into the deepest sorrow for its dead (ver. 10). The unhappy state of God-forsakenness into which they fall is described (ver. 11 f.) in the gravest terms: God's revealing word will be found in the land, not merely seldom (1 Sam. iii. 1), but not at all; so that in the greatest straits they have no light and counsel from above. They shall hunger, thirst, pine for the word which now they cannot even tolerate, their hunger and thirst being only for earthly goods. But if they should ever earnestly long for comfort and salvation, it will be too late: God has turned away from them because of their idolatry, leaving them to perish (ver. 13 f.).

Fifth Vision and Final Discourse, Ch. ix.

IX. 1. I saw the Lord standing over the altar; and he said: Smite the capital of the pillars that the beams shake, and break them in pieces on the head of all of them! And their hindmost ones I will slay with the sword; no fugitive of them shall flee away, and none that flees shall escape.

Chapter IX.

Ver. 1. The scene lies in the chief sanctuary of the northern kingdom, therefore at Bethel, not at Jerusalem, upon which so destructive a judgment would come too abruptly. The *altar* stands before the entrance of the house. Before it the Lord

2. Though they break through to the under-world, thence shall my hand fetch them; and though they mount up to heaven, thence will I bring them down. 3. And though they hide themselves on the head of Carmel, there will I seize them and fetch them; and though they would conceal themselves from my eyes in the depth of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and it shall bite them. 4. And though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword that it slay them; and will set mine eye upon them for evil and not for good. 5. And the Lord Yahveh of hosts, who touches the earth that it melts, and all who dwell therein despair; and it mounts up like the Nile-river at once, and sinks like the river of Egypt; 6. who built his high chamber and his vault in the heaven—he has

stands and charges an unnamed power of destruction: *Smite the capital of the pillars*, namely, of the main pillar. The סִפִּים here are not the thresholds, but the cross-beams resting on that pillar (as in Isa. vi. 4), which lose their support by its ruin, and fall on the multitude gathered at the feast.—בְּצָעֵם for בְּצָעֲם.—Their hindmost ones (as in ch. iv. 2), who are not struck in the overthrow of the building, the enemy's sword overtakes. Ver. 2 ff. Divine retribution will overtake them everywhere, which is poetically expanded. Cf. the Erinnyes of the Greeks. In Ps. cxxxix. 7 ff. is a similar description of the God who everywhere encompasses His creatures, and cannot be eluded. But here this omnipresence is more terrible, because pictured with exclusive reference to the pursuit of the transgressors. Ver. 3. *Carmel*, rich in wood and bush, and also in ravines and caves, which often served eremites for shelter. Carmel and the sea-depths correspond to heaven and Hades in ver. 2, and are at all events accessible to man. The serpent here is a dragon supposed to be in the sea, sea-serpent. Ver. 4. The *captives* also can retain no hope of escaping with life. The Assyrian judgment is in the seer's thoughts here also. Ver. 5 f. The sentence is formed like ch. iv. 13, depicting again God's majesty, but this time especially the terror which He inspires into creation. He needs only to touch the earth, and it splits and loses its steadfastness. Cf. the quite similar saying in ch. viii. 8, in another connection and with another purpose. Ver. 6. מְעָלוֹת = עֲלִיָּה—אגדה, binding together, hence vault. The visible heaven is meant, which forms a vault over the earth. On this

founded it on the earth; who calls the waters of the sea, and pours them out on the face of the earth—Yahveh is his name! 7. Are you not, then, like the sons of the Cushites to me, ye sons of Israel? is the oracle of Yahveh. Did I not bring Israel up out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines out of Caphtor, and Aram out of Kir? 8. Behold, the eyes of the Lord Yahveh are set on this sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the face of the earth; save that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, is Yahveh's oracle. 9. For, behold, I will command, and shake the house of Israel among all heathen nations, as one shakes with the sieve; and no grain shall fall to the ground. 10. By the sword shall all the sinners of my people die, who say: "Ruin shall not reach us, nor come near us." 11. On that day I will set up the hut of David, which is fallen down; and will repair its

God has His upper chambers.—הקרא, as in ch. v. 8. Ver. 7. The *Cushites* = Æthiopia; see on Isa. xviii. 1. That the *Philistines* came from *Caphtor* is stated also in Deut. ii. 23, Jer. xlvii. 4; the latter, in all probability, is the island of Crete; cf. Ezek. xxv. 16. See Delitzsch on Gen. x. 14 (*New Comm. on Genesis*).—*Aram*, the Syrians from *Kir;* see on ch. i. 5. As the Israelites now are, in their character as covenant-breakers, they stand to God in no other relation than the remote negroes; and when Israel appeals to the fact that it owes its land to Yahveh's special leading, even the uncircumcised Philistines have not come into their land without the aid of this God; just so the Aramæans. Here is the counterpoise to ch. vi. 1 f. The divine notice is fixed on this kingdom *in malam partem*, as the epithet "sinful" implies. This kingdom (Israel-Ephraim) will God destroy, but the *house of Jacob* (general designation of all Israel) not utterly; the Davidic kingdom shall continue in Judah. Ver. 9. Construction as in ch. vi. 11. Israel is shaken among the heathen, mixed with them; yet in this sifting only the chaff is lost: the Lord will proceed gently, so that no grain of corn will fall to the earth. Thus a sieve is meant which does not let the grains pass through while the chaff remains, but a finer one, which lets only dust and refuse pass through, while the grains remain. Ver. 11. The indefinite "on that day," according to the context, refers to the time when the judgment shall have come on the northern kingdom. —*Hut of David;* the kingdom of Judah is no longer to be

rents, and set up his ruins, and build it as long ago; 12. that they may take possession of the remnant of Edom, and all the heathen nations, over whom my name has been proclaimed, is the oracle of Yahveh, who performs this. 13. Behold, days come, says Yahveh, that the plowman overtakes the reapers, and the winepress-treader the sower of seed, and the mountains

called David's house, merely a "little house" (ch. vi. 11), a hut, and a dilapidated, half-ruined one. *Joash*, the predecessor of Jeroboam II., had humbled Amaziah of Judah most deeply (2 Kings xiv. 8 ff.; 2 Chron. xxv. 17 ff.); and under Jeroboam II. (2 Kings xiv. 25) Israel far outstripped the sister kingdom, which indeed flourished again in the course of Uzziah's reign, but only under Hezekiah, on the destruction of the northern kingdom, rose to great influence, and found itself free from its troublesome rival.—In ver. 11*b* the suffixes change very rapidly: the suff. fem. plur. in פרציהן seems to refer, not to the cities of Judah, but to a גְּדֵרוֹת implied in the verb (Delitzsch); that in הרסתיו to בַּיִת implied in סכת; ובניתיה joins on to סכת.—*As aforetime*, as in the days of the greatest splendour of the Davidic kingdom. Ver. 12 recalls Obad. 19 ff.; like the wicked neighbour there threatened by the prophet, *Edom* is named as an example; see ch. i. 11, cf. ch. i. 6, 9. *The remnant* of Edom to be understood as in ch. i. 8. Edom stands in place of all the heathen nations, *over whom the name* of Yahveh *was called*, i.e. according to Deut. xxviii. 10, 2 Sam. xii. 28 (cf. Jer. vii. 10), who have been solemnly proclaimed by Him as His property or subject lands, which was done in His promises to Israel and David's house. The divine rule, having its centre in Zion, will consequently again attain its promised magnitude. Incorrectly LXX: ὅπως ἐκζητήσωσιν οἱ καταλοιποι τῶν ἀνθρώπων, as they read, erroneously: לְמַעַן ידרשו שארית אָדָם! After this Acts xv. 16 f., supplementing freely. Ver. 13. The glorious order of things promised in the Torah, Lev. xxvi. 5, according to which the threshing time will stretch to the vintage, and this to the sowing time, is here surpassed in the first member by a prophetic hyperbole. One will scarcely be done with ploughing when the seed shall be already ripe, and scarcely with winepress-treading when the sowing will have to begin, which assumes as wondrously rapid a growth as an abundant vintage.—שׁכוּך הזרע, the sower; properly one who prolongs the seed, *i.e.* scatters it in long-drawn furrows. To this the same hyperbole is added as in Joel iv. 8: The hills melt with abundance of sap, wine.

drop with new wine, and all hills melt. 14. And I cause the captivity of my people Israel to return, and they shall build desolate cities and dwell therein, and plant vineyards and drink their wine, and plant gardens and eat their fruit. 15. And I will plant them on their land; and they shall no more be plucked out of their land, which I gave them, has Yahveh, thy God, said.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. ix. The Fifth Vision and the Final Discourse. 1. The Final Judgment, vv. 1–6; 2. The Change to Favour, vv. 7–15.

The fifth vision, a climax to the third, brings into view the final radical judgment. Here the Lord is seen, as He commands the pulling down of the national sanctuary at Bethel (cf. ch. vii. 13); and in such a way that the crowds of people gathered in the temple on a festal occasion perish in its ruins, and even the fugitives from this catastrophe are pursued by the executioners of divine vengeance over the whole world, yea up to heaven and down to hell. The omnipresence of God, which comforts the good, is terrible to them; for everywhere His angry look finds them.

In ch. ix. 7–12, finally, the discourse, after the menace of judgment has exhausted itself, passes abruptly into promise. The thought, that in view of the glorious promises, which the faithful God will not leave unfulfilled, this judgment cannot be one of absolute destruction, forms the transition (ver. 8). Certainly the northern kingdom must be completely dissolved, and its people thoroughly sifted among the heathen; but even then only the reprobate perish. But at the time when this sifting process shall be finished, Yahveh will again establish, in its pristine glory, the now half-overthrown and

Cf. מוג, Kal, ver. 5. Ver. 14. וישבתי, Hos. vi. 11. They shall rejoice in their work and its fruit; opposite of ch. v. 11.

dilapidated "tabernacle of David," *i.e.* the kingdom of Judah as such shall not perish, but attain to new power, and again take possession of its once subject-lands, like Edom, and all that the early promises assured to Israel. Thus will God bring home the scattered ones from captivity, and they shall all, with one mind, serve the house of David. Vv. 13–15 finally supplies a glimpse of the state of undisturbed peace and rich abundance which the land shall enjoy after this crisis, as Joel has already promised.

Thus Amos, the Judæan in Ephraim, while he can promise no resurrection to the northern kingdom, again expressly attaches the hopes of the future to the house of David, to which the promises of old belong. His followers, Hosea,—and especially Zechariah,—Isaiah, Micah, next advance to a personal interpretation of the Messianic hope, affirming its realisation in a particular Davidite. This Messiah the synagogue calls, after Amos ix. 11, Bar Naphli (Sanhedr. 76*b*); yet in Amos himself this personal culmination is wanting. Also in him the future Davidic kingdom (as in Obadiah) still appears in a form of modest limitation, inferior to its past. If Jeroboam II., in the prophet's lifetime, had restored the old boundaries of the northern kingdom, according to Jonah's prediction (2 Kings xiv. 25), according to the last oracle of Amos such a restoration of its power will be granted to the now prostrate house of David in still more perfect measure. The fulfilment of this promise was not exhausted in the elevation to influence and prosperity which began for Judah in the next period under Uzziah, nor yet in the highly significant divine arrangement by which the petty house of Judah survived the Assyrian catastrophe in which the house of Israel, according to the constantly repeated threats of Amos, found its end. These were only preliminary signs that God would redeem His word, and had designed a glorious future for Zion. Before, however, this future could dawn, even Judah-Jerusalem—as the predictions of a Hosea, Isaiah,

and the following prophets soon made known—must fall a prey to a still more complete doom of destruction and dispersion, in order, finally, to be built up in a purer and more spiritual form, and to enter on a more extensive period of empire, such as the shepherd of Tekoa was able to picture to himself and to his hearers. Standing on the height of N. T. knowledge, James therefore (Acts xv. 16 f.) renews the claim of Amos, to whom he was akin in spirit, while giving his words a more universal range.

OBADIAH.

Introduction.

The author of a single oracle against Edom is called Obadiah, עֹבַדְיָה = עֹבַדְיָהוּ = עַבְדּ יהוה, servant of Yahveh. Aptly as the name suits a prophet, it is improbable that Obadiah first assumed it as a prophet because of its meaning (so Augusti and Küper), since it was otherwise common. LXX wavers between *Ὀβδιού* and *Ἀβδιου*, *Ἀβδειου* (עֲבַדְיָהוּ). The occasion of this oracle was the more than unbrotherly conduct of the Edomites in a catastrophe that had fallen on Jerusalem. As very different dates are assigned to the latter, the oracle is regarded now as the oldest of the Minor Prophets, now as one of the latest (Hitzig, 312 B.C.!). The most probable course, no doubt, is to connect the calamitous day of Jerusalem-Judah, which is mentioned with all the expressions of sorrow, with the conquest and destruction by Nebuchadnezzar (588–87 B.C.), when the Edomites in fact took a hostile part (Lam. iv. 21 f.; Ezek. xxxv. 1 ff., especially ver. 5; Isa. lxiii. 1 ff.; Ps. cxxxvii. 7; Esdras Apocr. iv. 45, 50). But in comparison with Jer. xlix. 7 ff. (see there), the nearly allied oracle, Obad. 1–9, appears more original, as Caspari (*Der Proph. Obad.* 1842) has shown in detail, and most writers since have acknowledged. Obadiah's oracle is more of a piece, more characteristic, more graphic in language, to the point of daring; Jeremiah has removed everything unusual, and smoothed away everything uneven. As he has elsewhere in discourses respecting foreign peoples taken up again early

oracles, so here also he has evidently combined them, not without changes of phraseology in correspondence with his style. Connection and flow of speech are therefore far less vivid. But as this prophecy of Jeremiah was spoken before the destruction of ~~Jeremiah~~, probably as early as the fourth year of Jehoiakim, Obadiah, his prototype, cannot have this catastrophe behind him; and it will not do to refer Obad. 11 ff. to the future, because in this way the entire threatening would float in the air, and so severe an accusation on account of something which might only take place hereafter would seem incongruous. In order, therefore, to retain the reference of the oracle to the Babylonian conquest and captivity, Ewald, Graf, *et al.*, give up the unity of Obadiah, and make only vv. 1–9 (Graf) or vv. 1–10 (Ewald) belong to the original oracle, which Ewald (who, moreover, wrongly refers ver. 1 ff. to a plundering of Petra already past) attributes to a contemporary of Isaiah, as he also derives the passages vv. 15, 17, 18, which coincide with Joel, from an older prophet; whereas vv. 11–14, 16, 19–21 are said to have been added by an exile soon after the destruction of the Jewish State. As, however, the well-rounded form and natural progress of the oracle by no means gives the impression that it is the fruit of such a mosaic process, we hold fast to its unity and give up the identity of the misfortune described in ver. 10 ff. with the Babylonian catastrophe. The latter is as little meant here as in Joel, who in iv. 1 ff. (iii.) is plainly speaking of the same occurrences. Also in Obadiah there is no mention of the destruction of the city or of the temple (quite differently in Ps. cxxxvii.), only of its conquest and plunder, of riotous triumphal carousings (cf. Obad. 16 with Joel iv. 3), and cruel deportation of many inhabitants as well as of the vanquished Judæan army. The enemies consist, in any case, of a number of heathen peoples, who are called indefinitely זרים, נכרים (ver. 11), whereas the Chaldæan would have been more definitely characterised. But the prisoners were taken

away mostly to the north (as in Joel iv. 4 ff.) to the Phœnicians, who again, in Obadiah, also to all appearance sell them westward (cf. what is said under ver. 20 about Sepharad, and under Joel iv. 6, or Ezek. xxvii. 13, about Javan). On the other hand, there is no trace to be found here of a transplanting of the nation to Babylon; and nothing is said of fugitives into Egypt. Hence, in harmony with the remarks in the Introd. to Joel (p. 75), we come to the conclusion that Obadiah's oracle was occasioned by the conquest of Jerusalem under Jehoram, and arose soon after that event. According to 2 Chron. xxi. 16, the victorious enemies were Philistines (in Obad. 19 also not mentioned casually) and Arabians. The indefinite expressions in Obad. 11 well suit these allied peoples, who undertook the marauding expedition. But Edom, which then made use of the opportunity to get free from Judah's suzerainty (cf. 2 Kings viii. 20; 2 Chron. xxi. 8), for the first time startled the Judæans by open hostility, and so roused their indignation. Obadiah's oracle is plainly somewhat older than Joel's prophecies, where these disastrous events lie somewhat farther back, and Obadiah's saying, ver. 17, is expressly cited (Joel iii. 5). If Obadiah prophesied under Jehoram, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that he is identical with the "prince" of the same name, skilled in law, who is mentioned in 2 Chron. xvii. 7 (Delitzsch); yet this is not altogether probable.

Of special literature on Obadiah may be mentioned: Caspari, *Der Proph. Obad.* 1842; Fr. Delitzsch, "Wann weissagte Obadya?" in *Rudelb. u. Guer. Zeitschr.* 1851, p. 91 ff.; Perowne in Cambr. Bible for Schools.

Ver. 1. *Vision of Obadiah.* Thus says the Lord Yahveh to *Edom:* Tidings have we heard from Yahveh, and a

Ver. 1. *Vision*, generally of something revealed; see on Isa. i. 1. *Of Obadiah*, see Introd.—*Thus says* . . . —also general

messenger is despatched among the heathen, Arise ye, and let us arise against her to war! 2. Behold, I have made thee small among the nations: thou art greatly despised. 3. Thy heart's arrogance has beguiled thee, thou who dwellest in rock-clefts, his abode in the heights;* who says in his heart: Who will bring me down to the ground? 4. Though thou perch like the eagle, and thy nest be set among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, is Yahveh's oracle. 5. If thieves came to thee, if robbers of the night—how thou art

introduction of a divine message, as God does not immediately appear as the speaker. This heading is indispensable, at least as to its second part, as עליה (femin. personification of land and people, as in Jer. xlix. 14) goes back to לאדם (ל, see on Jer. xxiii. 9).—Of שמענו (Jer. xlix. 14 the sing. more tamely) the subject is perhaps not the heathen, but Israel-Judah, with which the prophet unites himself (Del.). Israel-Judah also is summoned; it takes a prominent part in the avenging war against Edom, ver. 18 ff. The content of the message (שמועה and ציר about synonymous) is: summons against Edom. After it has been received, we hear the nations forthwith encouraging one another to the war (cf. Jer. iv. 5, viii. 14, xx. 10, xxxv. 11). It is Yahveh who calls them together as His vassals against His foe (cf. Isa. xiii. 3). Therefore in ver. 2 He begins to speak. Ver. 2. God proclaims His purpose of humbling Edom; it is deeply humiliated by Him, of course not yet in outward reality. Ver. 3. Relying on its inaccessible dwelling-places (see Comm. on Jer. xlix. 16), Edom took every licence. זדון from זוד, to boil, bubble over, expressive word for pride, arrogance, which scorns all limits.—שכני, Ges. § 90, 3*a*.—מרום ש׳ would be in opposition to בחגוי־ם׳: "in rocky clefts, his lofty seat." But the lines of the verse would be cumbrous; rather read מרום. Ver. 4. Wert thou far more unreachable, God would get at thee. The image of the eagle's nest, aptly fitting the Edomite nests of robbers, is further heightened by a position among the stars. קנך is not indeed to be joined to חגביה, which would be awkward, but really the lofty abode, not the flying (Job v. 7), is meant. שים, partic. pass.—On the idea, cf. Amos ix. 2 f., and again, differently, Isa. xiv. 13 f. Ver. 5. The prophet sees already the effect of the divine attack; it is one which mocks all comparison. This is illustrated with drastic vividness (Jer. xlix. 9 differently, see Comm.). The conditional אם repeated, not negative (Kleinert: verily not),

laid waste!—would they not steal as much as they needed? If vinedressers came to thee, would they not leave a gleaning? 6. How are they of Esau searched out, his precious things searched into! 7. All thy confederate ones have pushed thee to the border: thy friendly ones have beguiled, overpowered thee; as thy bread they lay a snare under thee, in whom there is no prudence. 8. Shall I not on that day make the wise men vanish from Edom, and prudence from the mountain of Esau? 9. And thy mighty men shall despair, O Teman, that every one may be rooted out from the mountain of Esau by slaughter.

but also not simply interrogative (De Wette), sets forth the conceivable possibilities, which are then put aside as out of place, as the devastation exceeds all limits. The plunderers settled here are, in fact, no stealthy thieves or secret night-robbers, to whose action a limit is set; nor are they modest grape-gatherers, who impose a limit on themselves.—דַּיָּם is therefore here limiting: only as much as they need or can carry. On the other hand, Hitzig erroneously: they shall leave a gleaning only. Ver. 6. On Edom's treasures, cf. Comm. on Jer. xlix. 10. The verse states the Nemesis for the plunder of Jerusalem. The expressions in Jeremiah are more ordinary. Ver. 7. Nemesis for Edom's treachery. The *confederates* will not receive the fugitives, but push them over the boundary. The *friends* (cf. Judg. iv. 17) cunningly use the straits of a neighbouring nation to overpower it, deceiving the otherwise so clever Edom.—מְזוֹר cannot here mean either wound or bandage. The versions render it by *snare*, which the context requires.—Hitzig would read אֹכְלֵי לַחְמְךָ, after Ps. xli. 10; this is needless. לַחְמְךָ is second accus. As thy bread, which they, the friends, should offer thee (cf. again Judg. iv. 17), they get ready a snare, hostile ambush. — The last words are a relative clause, with transition to 3 pers. as in ver. 3*a*. Edom's *wisdom*, see on Jer. xlix. 7. Ver. 9. *Teman*, Ezek. xxv. 13.—מִקְּטֹל, not "without conflict" (Ewald), as it rather means slaying, without which a destruction of the heroes is inconceivable; but causative מִקְטֹל, as in Gen. ix. 11. The versions (except Targ.) have joined it to what follows, where, however, it does not fit. Rather the word is a terrible conclusion to the whole curse, opening out the prospect of a general slaughter.

10. For the outrage to thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, that thou mayest be rooted out for ever! 11. On the day when thou stoodest as a foe, on the day when strangers carried away his army, and foreigners entered his gate, and cast lots on Jerusalem, thou also wast as one of them. 12. And yet thou shouldst not have feasted thy eyes on the day of thy brother on the day of his misfortune, and shouldst not have rejoiced for the sons of Judah in the day of their destruction, nor have talked arrogantly in the day of distress. 13. Thou shouldst not have entered the gate of my people in their evil day, nor have looked with delight on his trouble in his evil day, nor stretched out thy hand to his wealth in

Ver. 10. Now first comes the justification of the preceding sentence of doom, as no one could be in doubt about it after what has been said: *All this is because of the outrage to* (Joel iv. 19) *thy brother* (!) *Jacob.* Ver. 11. Instead of standing on Judah's side, where nature should have summoned thee, thou *stoodest over against*, looking with hostile intent (2 Sam. xviii. 13). חַיִל here after שבות in personal sense, as in ver. 20; differently in ver. 20. The suffixes refer to Jacob, not Jerusalem; cf. שער עמי, ver. 13. The three clauses rise in climax: Judah's army captive without, the capital taken, the people and property found therein seized and distributed (Joel iv. 3). Even *thou* (!) wast (*sc.* הָיִיתָ) as one of them, *i.e.* wast among the number of booty-loving invaders, and didst act as they did. Ver. 12 ff. More detailed enumeration of Edom's misdeeds in ascending order.—Thou shouldst *not have feasted* (ראה with בְּ, to feast his eyes on an unfortunate one, as in Ps. xxii. 18: also Mesha inscription, edition by Smend and Socin, l. 4) = thou oughtest not to have. The jussive stands by way of graphic delineation.—*On the day of thy brother*, more precisely explained by what follows. נֵכָר, first of all the oft-mentioned unhappy day (here only), the opposite of the well-known and welcome one, a state which one casts off, abhors, wretchedness, cf. Job xxxi. 3, נֵכֶר. Cf. *fortuna aliena*, contrary fate. The second and third clauses refer to the audible expression of rejoicing in evil (לְבְנֵי, at their expense). To *open the mouth wide*, to pour scorn on the conquered; elsewhere often in this sense הרחיב פה על, Ps. xxxv. 21; Isa. lvii. 4; cf. however, Ezek. xxxv. 13. —As to what day is meant, see Introd. Ver. 13. They did not stop at joy in the evil, and scorn; they entered the city

his evil day. 14. And thou shouldest not have stood at the crossway to destroy his fugitives, nor have taken captive his escaped ones in the day of distress.

15. For near is the *day of Yahveh* on all heathen nations: like as thou didst, men shall do to thee; what thou didst inflict shall return on thy own head. 16. For as you drank on my holy mount, all heathen nations shall drink continually, and drink and guzzle, and shall be as though they were not. 17. But on Mount Zion shall be a multitude escaped, and it shall be a sanctuary; and they of the house of Jacob shall

with the foe and joined in the plunder. אויד, thrice emphatically —elsewhere *res sacra miser* holds good!—תישלחנה (*sc.* יָדָךְ, which may be left out), emphatic imperfect form (corresponding to the Arabic *anna*, up), as in Judg. v. 26; cf. Ex. i. 10; Job xvii. 16; Isa. xxviii. 3, — unless with Olshausen and most moderns we read תְּשַׁלַּח יָד; cf. Ges. § 47, Anm. 3. Ver. 14. Still worse, they even attacked the men, watched for the Jewish fugitives at the crossway (פרק), where they scattered and treated them with violence, even killed them if they offered resistance. סגר, Hiphil, here (differently from Amos i. 6, 9) absolutely, means perhaps simply: *to take captive*, put into custody, confinement (cf. Job xi. 10), although the meaning "deliver up" is also admissible. Ver. 15. Cf. Joel i. 15, ii. 1 f. —The prospect of the approaching reckoning-day of Yahveh should have restrained Edom from its outrageous conduct. The "Day of Yahveh," if we date Obadiah rightly, is a phrase here used for the first time in the prophetic writings, which indeed seems already current, and is characterised more plainly than elsewhere by the parallel clause as the day of retribution or reckoning which Yahveh holds.—גמלך, cf. Joel iv. 4, 7. Ver. 16. The wild drinking-bouts of the arrogant conquerors in the captured Jerusalem (cf. Joel iv. 3), will find their recompense when they come to drink a stupefying, deadly drink. —לעו, from לוּעַ, to swallow, unless with Del. from לָעָה, to rave, after the Arabic *laǵā*.—כלא = כַּאֲשֶׁר לֹא, as לא היו as a whole is governed in the genitive by the preposition: cf. Del. on Ps. xxxviii. 14. They will one day, as they once lay scattered about drunk, lie stupefied by another drunken fit, from which they will not awake. Ver. 17. פליטה, see on the dependent passage Joel iii. 5.—קדש on Joel iv. 17. Their possessions are the provinces and subject lands lost since Solomon's days.

seize their possessions. 18. And the house of Jacob shall be fire, and the house of Joseph flame, and the house of Esau stubble, and they shall set them on fire and consume them, so that no remnant shall be left to Esau: for Yahveh has said it. 19. And they of the south shall seize the mountain of Esau, and they of the lowland the land of the Philistines: and they shall seize the field of Ephraim, and the field of Samaria; but Benjamin (shall seize) Gilead. 20. And this

Ver. 18. שריד, here not an individual person, but as in Isa. i. 9. The house of *Jacob* is here, where the house of *Joseph* is distinguished from it, as already in ver. 17, Judah. Against Edom the two will be one, one fire, from which there is no escape. Ver. 19. How all the possessions are seized by Judah is thus explained: the inhabitants of the Judæan *south-country* (Josh. xv. 21) migrate into the *Edomite* land bordering on that country, and the Judæans of the western *lowland* (Josh. xv. 33 ff., where also Philistine towns are reckoned in it) into the bordering *Philistine* land. In the same way they (of course the Judæans) regain the rebellious territory of *Ephraim*, specifically *Samaria*. But probably here also a more specific subject stood after וירשו and indeed ההר, the inhabitants of the *mountain-land* of Judah (Josh. xv. 48 ff.), which formed the main stock of its tribal country, and bordered on Ephraim to the north. The τὸ ὄρος in LXX seems to be a remnant of this word. So Ewald.—*Benjamin*, the faithful covenant-ally, whose territory reaches to the Jordan, goes thence to *Gilead*, i.e. here across to the east-Jordan country generally. Ver. 20. In the first clause וירשו still keeps its influence; it is only repeated in the second clause. The subject thereto is *this captured army* (חֵל, defective for חֵיל, in sense as in ver. 11). The object is the land of the Canaanites up to *Zarpath*, now Sarafend, south of Sidon, somewhat inland. The recently captured army, ver. 11, which, as every one knew, was carried away northward, will there seize the Phœnician coast, which also, according to the programme in Josh. xiii. 4–6, belongs to the Promised Land (cf. Ezek. xlvii. 15 ff.).—That the prophet himself, because of החל הזה, belonged to the army is possible, but not necessarily required. From this army the multitude of captives, seized in Jerusalem itself and dwelling in *Sepharad*, is distinguished. The latter is referred by Syr. Targ. to Spain, which was so called by the later Jews; Vulg.: Bosphorus. Both are misled by the sound. On the other hand, in the inscriptions of Darius

captive host of the sons of Israel (shall seize) what belongs to the Canaanites unto Zarephath; and the captivity of Jerusalem, which is in Sepharad, shall seize the cities of the south. 21. And deliverers shall come up on Mount Zion to judge the mountain of Esau; and the royal power shall come to Yahveh.

Exposition.

Contents of Obadiah. Reproof of Edom. 1. The Threat-

a land Çparda is several times found, always along with Jauna, and Sylv. de Sacy early combined it with this ספרד. This is supported by the fact that in Joel iv. 6 the Phœnicians are accused of having given up captured Judæans to the Javanese (Jauna). Spharad=Çparda of the stone-inscriptions is therefore to be sought in the west, probably = Sardes, in vernacular speech Çvarda.—On the other hand, the conjecture of Schrader (*Cun. Inscr.* vol. ii. 145), which Friedr. Del. (*Paradies*, 249) *et al.* adopt, that ספרד refers to the Saparda of the Sargon inscriptions situated in South-west Media, rests on the supposition, which has nothing to favour it in the context and in Joel, that the captives meant are those carried away by Nebuchadnezzar.—Sparta also is not to be seen in it, as prisoners were scarcely sold thither, and no more general meaning of this name is known (König).—*The cities of the south;* the latter district already named first in ver. 19. The cities of the same (cf. Riehm, *Handwörterb.* p. 785*a*) are enumerated in Josh. xv. 21 ff.; a portion of them were really to fall to Simeon, according to Josh. xix. 1 ff., which is here of no consequence. Of course, the captives in Sepharad are not found specifically in the vicinity of this district; residing across the sea, they cannot conquer any neighbouring territory: but the thought is that they will return to Jerusalem, and from there enter on the campaign. Ver. 21. הושיע and שפט describe the work of the early judges on its two sides, as they were deliverers of the people, and then in consequence its rulers. Such deliverers will arise again and fix the seat of their rule on Mount Zion, whence they will exercise authority over Esau and the surrounding peoples. The last significant clause affirms that they will govern in the name of Yahveh: but the Lord will be the King ruling unconditionally, according to the ideal in practice from Moses to Samuel.

ening, vv. 1–9; 2. The Reasons, vv. 10–14; 3. The Day of the Lord, vv. 15–21.

In lively indignation at the faithless, abominable conduct of Edom, the prophet announces to this people (vv. 1–9) just retribution: its pride will be deeply humbled by the nations summoned together by the Lord, its seemingly inaccessible and impregnable rock-fastnesses thoroughly plundered, its physical force broken. Moreover, from its allies and friends it will suffer base treachery, and so, despite its proverbial astuteness, be shamefully deceived. Although it is easy to conjecture from these threats of well-merited retribution what Edom has done, this in the first excitement, because well known to all, is not declared, but follows first in vv. 10–14. In the marauding invasion of Jerusalem by confederate foreign tribes, which has recently taken place, and in which the Judæan army was beaten, the capital plundered, and many inhabitants carried off captive, Edom also rejoiced at the misfortune, and was eager for plunder; while, on the other hand, it lay in wait for the Judæans, taking refuge in its territory to sell them as slaves. The motive was base avarice, and also joy at the fall of its long-envied brother-nation, whose misfortunes its former subjects hastened to complete.

In ver. 15 ff. the gaze expands into a vision of the Day of the Lord. As Edom has put itself on a level with the hostile heathen nations, it will suffer from Yahveh the same fate as they, with whom He will reckon on that day, especially for the crimes committed against His people. This day, of course, as little to be limited to twenty-four hours as the day of Jerusalem's calamity in ver. 12 ff., is the crisis when God's righteousness, in particular His judicial retribution, attains universal realisation. This retribution is here viewed according to the measure of the wrong done to Jerusalem in this way: the heathen nations, and Edom with them, again assemble against the city of God, and are there overtaken by divine vengeance, so that we see them lying round the mount

of the Lord as recently after their drunken orgies, in this case, of course, filled with deadly drunkenness. On the other hand, as Joel already foretold, the community found on Mount Zion will survive the judgment of the nations, and in union with the house of Joseph will destroy Edom, which has thus been terribly weakened. But Zion remains the starting-point and centre of the new rule of God, Judah taking possession of the Israelitish territories which had revolted, and of the neighbouring provinces which had been long destined to vassalage, in which conquest even those dragged into captivity do good service. Thus again the kingdom is completed as in its best days (cf. Amos ix. 11) by God's champions, who will be the deliverers and judges of their nation, but are not called kings, that Yahveh's sovereignty may remain intact. For the spiritual kernel of this promise and the germ of every future one lies in the final clause which, as an echo of Ex. xv. 18, ascribes to Yahveh the supremacy in this kingdom.

The fulfilment of the threat against Edom is seen first in Mal. i. 3, where a complete devastation of Edom, perhaps by the Chaldæans, is assumed. This devastation began to fulfil Obadiah's and Jeremiah's oracles, which had meantime been issued, but did not exhaust them, as Malachi also contemplates further judgments. Subsequently, the Maccabæans, those last successful champions who fought with the sword for the O. T. theocracy, real "deliverers" and "judges," waged a triumphant war of revenge against Edom, 1 Macc. v. 3, 65; Joseph. *Ant.* xii. 8. 1. First Judas defeated them; then John Hyrcanus reduced them to complete subjection, and even forced them to receive circumcision. They were subjected by Alexander Jannai (*Ant.* xiii. 15. 4); and, finally, the Idumæans entirely perished in the wars of the Jewish zealots against the Romans, *Bell. Jud.* iv. 9. 7. The little, which is promised about the setting up of the divine rule, needed to be first spiritualised by succeeding prophets before it was fulfilled.

JONAH.

Introduction.

Of Jonah, son of Amittai, who, according to 2 Kings xiv. 25, was a native of Gath-hepher, in the tribe of Zebulon (Josh. xix. 13), probably now El Meshed, an hour north of Nazareth (therefore a prophet out of Galilee!), and who foretold the restoration under Jeroboam II. of the North-Israelite kingdom in its former extent, who therefore perhaps lived in his days, a series of peculiar events is here related, which group themselves round a divine mission of the prophet to the Assyrian capital, Nineveh. This mission, to which the prophet had to submit despite his resistance, had the God-willed, and to the prophet himself certainly unwelcome, effect, that the heathen city repented, and so escaped the threatened doom. The booklet, with its thoroughly narrative strain, stands in this group of the Canon quite by itself, wearing clearly the appearance of a didactic prophetical work, written still less, *e.g.*, than the histories of Elijah and Elisha, in a mere historical interest, but to give instruction on certain truths. Hence the lack of precise information respecting the person and former life of Jonah, as well as the abrupt conclusion. After Jonah has received his lesson, the author does not trouble himself about his further fate.

Jonah himself nowhere claims to be the author. The narrator rather speaks of a past lying far behind (cf. ch. iii. 3, and Nineveh *was* a great city). The Jonah psalm, also, ch. ii., is not inserted in the most suitable place, as it is a

thanksgiving song after deliverance. The linguistic Aramaisms might indeed be understood as North-Palestine expressions from former times. Yet they rather point to a late composition of the piece in the exile, or after it. This is confirmed by near affinity of ideas with Deutero-Isaiah (see below). We shall therefore do best to think of the last Chaldæan or first Persian age. Gesenius, *et al.*, suppose a pre-exilic origin of the book; Kleinert, exilic; Ewald, Bleek, Nöldeke, Schrader, Reuss, post-exilic. According to Hitzig, it was only written in the Maccabæan age, in which case, however, it certainly would not have found its way into this section of the Canon.

In view of this didactic purpose of the narrator, we might conjecture that the whole is a work of imagination, the author selecting a character at will from the past, and freely shaping the legend in the way best suited to enforce his teaching (Hitzig, Reuss). But this has no support; the fish miracle is not the product of his fancy. Whether we regard it as a historical fact or assign it to legend, it was certainly matter of tradition. For it cannot easily be brought into harmony with the didactic purpose of the narrator, as is shown by the explanations of most of the expositors, who are unable to extract any special moral teaching from it. A prophetic mission of Jonah to Nineveh must also have been handed down by tradition, and, indeed, in connection with that adventure; in the same way, an astonishing result of his preaching. In the same way, the narrator found the Jonah psalm ready to hand. Had he himself composed it out of fragments of other prayers, as is now generally supposed, he would have introduced the psalm, in this case also well put together, at a more fitting point. It springs, without doubt, from a shipwrecked man, who has escaped the worst peril, but is not yet back at home,—perhaps from Jonah himself. The possibility is beyond question, if, with Ewald, we regard Jonah ii. 4 as older than Ps. xlii., or make this psalm to have

been sung before 800. That other psalms, *e.g.* Ps. xviii. in any case, are used in it is no disproof of the psalm being a prayer springing from the deepest distress; for, in such inner anguish as Jonah must have passed through in the belly of the monster, even a prophet catches at short sayings and songs treasured in the mind (cf. the loftiest example, Jesus on the cross). But in the thanksgiving of Jonah ii. just that finds utterance which passed through his soul in those distressing hours. On the other hand, the vivid, drastic delineation and colouring in detail belongs to the narrator.

But what was the didactic purpose? Hitzig thought the book has an apologetic meaning, namely, to justify God in regard to unfulfilled prophecies against the heathen; in particular, the reference is to the unfulfilled prophecy of Obadiah against Edom! But chs. iii., iv. would have sufficed for this; why the immense expenditure in chs. i., ii.? Similar, although more generally, Riehm: "the practical aim of the book is to give direction about the right attitude to the prophetic threats; we must respect them as God's words, which the prophet himself has to proclaim against his will; but we may also avert their fulfilment by repentance; and if this takes place, we must not be offended because God's word is not fulfilled" (*Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* 1862, p. 413 f.). We do not see why, for such an end, the entirely abnormal event of the sending of a prophet to the heathen world should be narrated. Von Hofmann also does not take sufficient account of the peculiarity of the book, when he finds in it instruction respecting the prophet's office, prophecy, and fulfilment. Cf. also Volck (Herzog, vii. 85): "What happened to Jonah is characteristic of the prophetic calling. We learn hence (1) that the prophet must perform what God commands him, however strange it may seem to him; (2) that even death cannot nullify his call; (3) that the prophet has no right to the fulfilment of his prediction, but must leave it in God's hand."

Although all these lessons may be drawn from the book, its real purpose is different. What runs like a red thread through the whole, and at last becomes a knot, whose unloosing in iv. 10 f. forms the glorious finale, is the conduct of God to the heathen world, which is here revealed as full of goodwill and love, in opposition to the limited, narrow-hearted notion current in Israel, and not impossible even to a prophet like Jonah; while the conduct of the heathen to God, both that of the seamen and the Ninevites, must put the Jews to shame by their reverence for the Deity and their ready repentance. The national limits of the Old Covenant are here wondrously broken through; the entire heathen world opens as a mission-field to the messengers of Yahveh. Thus the book, with its wide-hearted outlook on God's ways, and sharp criticism of the selfish spirit of the Jewish people, as a didactic work, is itself a miracle in the literature of this people. Its purpose has been thus substantially understood, *i.e.* as a rebuke of Jewish particularism, in the train of Kimchi, by de Wette, Delitzsch, Bleek, Reuss. But cf. also early, Semler, J. D. Michaelis, Friedrichsen, *et al.* Kleinert combines this explanation with the attractive hypothesis, that this narrative is "symbolic;" Jonah means Israel. See the details there, p. 16 f. The view that it was Israel's prophetic vocation to carry light and truth to the heathen, would appeal to Isa. xl.–xlvi.: in the present book, the faults of the servant of Yahveh are pointed out, which unfit him for the mission, and also God's dealings with him. Israel withdraws from its calling; it mounts (in search of gain?) the merchant vessel, and gives up its relation to the temple. The monster by which it is swallowed up is the world-power (exile), which, however, must again surrender it after three days, as the term is fixed in Hos. vi. 2. Thus we should have here the grand missionary vocation for which the nation was trained. Kleinert also supposes that a traditional history supplied the material. His hypothesis, which would

certainly also easily explain the Christological references, perhaps goes too far, so far as it assumes an artificial clothing of the national idea and history in personal garb. On the other hand, it seems right to us to suppose that the narrator wishes to hold up before his nation,—in particular, before the bearers of divine revelation,—in this history of Jonah, which he revives, a mirror in which it may see with shame its own incapacity to understand God's great dealings, and to take part in His world-embracing love, in order that it may become more equal to its high calling to carry God's revelation to the heathen. The exile, as Deutero-Isaiah shows, impressed the most enlightened of the nation with these ideas.

If we reflect what an epoch-making event the first mission of a prophet of the true God to a centre of the heathen world was, this consideration will throw some light on the fish miracle, which, from early days, has given much occasion for doubt, scorn, and misinterpretation. Rationalism resorted to the supposition that the adventure with the fish was a dream of Jonah (so Abrabanel early), or the fish was a symbol of a ship which received him, or an inn, etc. Gesenius, de Wette, Knobel, *et al.*, have seen in this history a Hebrew version of a Greek myth, either of the story of Hercules delivering Hesione, who was fastened to a rock, and so abandoned to a monster (Diod. Sic. iv. 42; Ovid, *Metam.* xi. 217); or the Perseus myth, in which the hero delivers Andromeda, bound to a rock near Joppa and exposed to the same fate, by slaying the dreaded monster by means of Medusa's head. But the dissimilarity of the Hebrew narrative is so great that the two parallels lead to nothing. The only point of similarity consists in this, that in the Perseus myth Joppa forms the scene, from which also Jonah's voyage begins, and that in both myths a κῆτος is mentioned. On the other hand, the version which makes Hercules himself enter into the monster's body and stay there three days is of later origin, and perhaps originated in our book.

So extraordinary an event is rather to be understood from the moral significance of the entire history. If Peter, in the same Joppa, needed a heavenly vision before he set foot in the first heathen house, a still stronger divine interposition was necessary in the Old Covenant to overcome the resistance of the spirit of national self-righteousness, which deemed the impure heathen fit objects of divine wrath, but denied to them God's mercy. What moved Jonah to run away from God's commission was not merely the presentiment which the North-Israelite prophet might have, that from this Nineveh, unless it is destroyed, ruin threatens his own country (Abrabanel); but in the last resort, the jealousy which would not allow that the God of Israel stands in the same relation to the heathen as to His chosen people, a foreboding in a sense that the heathen might take the place of the disobedient first-born son.

The high significance of Jonah's mission to Nineveh is evident also from the way in which Jesus looks back to it, Matt. xii. 38 ff. (xvi. 4); Luke xi. 29 f. As Jonah found faith in the Ninevites, so Jesus will find faith in the heathen for a witness against this unbelieving generation, yet not without Jesus, like Jonah going through the abyss of Hades. Thus the mission of Jonah to Nineveh, so epoch-making in the Old Covenant, stands in intimately close relation to the central teaching of the New Covenant (the imparting of salvation to all the world through Christ's death and resurrection). From this point of view, therefore, the miracle, which is a stumbling-block to many, appears fully justified on religious grounds. It is not, indeed, proved with conclusive necessity that, if the resurrection of Jesus was a physical fact, Jonah's abode in the fish's belly must also be just as historical. On this point also the saying, "A greater than Jonah is here," holds good. But, on the other hand, how arbitrary it is to assert, with Reuss, that Jesus regarded Jonah's history as a parable! On the contrary, Jesus saw in

it a sign, a powerful evidence of the same divine power which showed itself also in His dying in order to live again and triumph in the world. Whoever, therefore, feels the religious greatness of the book, and accepts as authoritative the attitude taken to its historical import by the Son of God Himself, will be led to accept a great act of the God who brings down to Hades and brings up again, as an actual experience of Jonah in his flight from his Lord. See on ch. ii. 1.

Of the extensive special literature on Jonah (see Herzog, vii. 86) may be mentioned: Friedrichsen, *Krit. Uebersicht der verschiedenen Ansichten über das B. Jona*, 2 Aufl. 1841; Franz Delitzsch, "Ueber das B. Jona," in the *Luth. Zeitschr. von Rudelbach und Guericke*, 1840, p. 112 ff.; M. Baumgarten, "Ueber das Zeichen des Propheten Jona," *ibid.* 1842, ii. p. 1 ff.; W. Böhme, "Die Composition des Buches Jona," in the *Zeitschr. f. die altt. Weissensch.* 1887, p. 224 ff. (discovers five authors or redactors in the book!). (Perowne, "Jonah," Cambr. Bible; Dale in *Expositor*, July 1892.)

I. 1. And the word of Yahveh came to Jonah, the son of Amittai, as follows: 2. Arise, go to Nineveh, the great city, and preach against it; for their wickedness is come up before my face. 3. Then Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish

Chapter I.

Ver. 1. ויהי stamps the book as a narration (cf., however, Ezek. i. 1 also). Historical matters always follow on a long series; hence even independent narratives begin with this ו (cf. Ruth i. 1).—*Jonah*, son of A., see Introd. Ver. 2. *Nineveh* is called *the great* city κατ' ἐξ. (cf. Gen. x. 12); Diodorus calls it the greatest, ii. 3. See respecting its extent ch. iii. 3, cf. iv. 11.—קרא, κήρυσσειν, with עַל of a testimony against it, but which, as Jonah at once notes (iv. 2), may also lead it to repentance (which Del. also rightly applies to 1 Pet. iii. 19). Ver. 3. He flees in the opposite direction; he hastens to the farthest west instead of the far east. *Tarshish*, Ezek. xxvii. 12. —מלפני ה׳: he wishes to get out of God's sight, that He may not by His presence remind him of the commission.—*Joppa* =

from the face of Yahveh; and he went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish: and paid the fare thereof, and embarked on it, in order to go with them to Tarshish away from the face of Yahveh. 4. But Yahveh hurled a great wind on the sea, that a mighty storm arose on the sea, and the ship was on the point of foundering. 5. Then the seamen were afraid, and cried out every one to his god, and they cast the tackling which was in the ship into the sea, to make it lighter for themselves. But Jonah had gone down to the hinder part of the ship, and lain down, and was sunk in deep sleep. 6. Then the commander of the crew came to him, and said to him, What art thou thinking of, to sleep? Arise, call on thy God! Perhaps God will remember us, that we perish not. 7. Then they said one to another, Come, let us cast lots, that we may learn on whose account this calamity befalls us. And they cast lots; then the lot fell on Jonah. 8. And they said to him, Tell us now on whose account this

Ἰόππη, Acts ix. 36, *et al.*, the present Jaffa on the Mediterranean Sea, a seaport even then.—באה, partic.=on the point of going.—The suff. in שכרה applies to אניה, so also בָּהּ. The Hebrew says, to go *down* to a ship.—אמיהם, Ges. § 103, Anm. 2. Ver. 4. טול, Hiphil, a favourite word with the author (cf. vv. 5, 12, 15) for casting; it is originally "to cast forward;" cf. ἔβαλεν, Acts xxvii. 14 (Del.).—חשבה, Piel, was minded, purposed to founder, *i.e.* its foundering was within sight. Ver. 5. The seamen, a mixed company of different nations, had also different gods.—The tackling, σκευή, Acts xxvii. 19, not goods.—ירכתי, here the innermost and also lowest room, cf. Ezek. xxxii. 23. Ver. 6. החבל, collectively the seamen, cf. Ezek. xxvii. 8; whereas המלחים, ver. 5, may also embrace all the persons on shipboard.—Properly, why (does it happen) to thee a sleeper, namely to be? or, "why (art thou) to thyself a sleeper?" עשת, Hithp. (as in Aramaic), to bethink oneself of something, here used of Divine Providence, with dativ. comm.; cf. Ps. xl. 18: יחשב לי (Ibn Esra). Ver. 7. On the supposition that so fearful a storm has not happened by chance, but must be a divine visitation for a dreadful crime, they cast lots with dice or other marked objects, which were shaken together until one leaped out.—בשלמי, properly, by the matter (שֶׁ=אֲשֶׁר) in regard to whom, *i.e.* on account of whose matter. Ver. 8. The words ה׳ לנו באשר למי ה are wanting in several

calamity befalls us? What is thy business, and whence comest thou? What is thy country, and of what people art thou? 9. Then he said to them, I am a Hebrew; and I fear Yahveh, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land. 10. Then the men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him, What hast thou done? For they knew that he was fleeing from Yahveh, for he had told them. 11. And they said to him, What shall we do to thee, that the sea may be calm about us? for the sea grew more and more stormy. 12. Then he said to them, Take me up, and fling me into the sea; and the sea shall be calm about you: for I know well that on my account this great storm has come upon you. 13. Then the men rowed in order to get back to the land;

codices, and are not expressed by LXX, Vat. Hitzig, Grimm reject them as out of place. But they might be omitted because they so appear, and may be understood as indicating that they would have a fuller explanation as to who he is, and also whether he will confess his fault, and so confirm the result of the lot (cf. ver. 12).—אי מזה עם, cf. 2 Sam. xv. 2. Ver. 9. The Israelites are usually called *Hebrews* by foreigners (Gen. xxxix. 14, 17), or call themselves such in contrast with foreigners (Gen. xl. 15), as it is the usual designation of this people in international intercourse. In this answer the prophet practises no reserve. *Yahveh* is the national God of this people (Ex. vii. 16); but, as Jonah at once declares, not a particular, limited god, but dwelling in heaven and Creator of the world, specifically of the sea also. Ver. 10. This unexpected announcement of the true, supreme God had an extremely disquieting effect, as it was now only too evident whence the storm came. That Jonah also told them what quarrel he has with this God, is brought out without pressure first at the close of ver. 10.—Withdrawing in disobedience from the almighty Creator seems to the heathen sailors a heinous offence, as they declare by the exclamation, What hast thou done!=How couldst thou do this? cf. Gen. iii. 13. Ver. 11. They show their full confidence in him by asking, how by punishing him they may avert his sin from themselves; and he shows himself worthy of such confidence. Ver. 12. הלך, partic. in meaning as in 1 Sam. ii. 26; 2 Sam. iii. 1. Ver. 13. Instead of obeying the summons in ver. 12, the seamen exert all their strength in a noble rivalry of good feeling to bring the ship to land by *rowing*, as sailing is

but they were not able: for the sea raged more and more against them. 14. Then they cried to Yahveh, and said: Ah, we beseech, Yahveh, let us not perish now for the soul of this man, and do not impute to us innocent blood: for thou art Yahveh, as it pleased thee thou hast done. 15. Then they took up Jonah, and flung him into the sea: then the sea ceased from its raging. 16. Then the men were exceedingly afraid before Yahveh, and they offered sacrifices to Yahveh, and vowed vows.

II. 1. Then Yahveh appointed a great fish to swallow up

impossible. חתר, properly, to break through the water; according to others (Keil, Steiner), to break through the waves, to try to master, to exert one's self, παρεβιάζοντο (LXX); according to Hitzig: to turn round, reverse. The nautical expression cannot be certainly defined. Ver. 14. When all was in vain they decided on the extreme step, yet not without having first implored from the God, who had so mightly revealed Himself to them, gracious and righteous indulgence. אָנָּה (with accent on the last, see Baer here).—אָנָּא from אָהַ־נָּא, in case of importunate, fervent prayer.—*For the soul of this man*, i.e. in recompence for his murder; cf. Deut. xix. 21; 2 Sam. xiv. 7. Substantially the same in meaning: Do not lay on us innocent (נקיא with pleonastic א as in Joel iv. 19) blood, which, of course, does not mean that they did not count him worthy of death (Hitz.), but, on the contrary, declare that they do not think they are thereby guilty of shedding innocent blood, and believe they may also reckon on receiving this favourable judgment of their action from God, as in His sovereignty He has driven them by circumstances to this act. Cf. with this: Thou art Yahveh, etc., 1 Sam. iii. 18. Ver. 16. When the sudden calming of the sea made Yahveh's rule still more evident, their fear was increased, and expressed itself in sacrifices, which they offered on shipboard, and vowed in greater abundance (according to the custom of voyagers) when they reached home in safety. The setting up of votive tablets was also a part of this custom.

Chapter II.

Ver. 1. מנה, Piel, a favourite word of this narrator for the ruling of Divine Providence, properly = to assign, determine.—

Jonah: and Jonah was in the bowels of the fish three days and three nights. 2. And Jonah prayed to Yahveh, his God, from the belly of the fish. 3. And he said, I called out of my distress to the Lord, then he heard me; out of the belly of the underworld I cried, then thou heardest my voice. 4. And thou didst cast me down into the abyss, in the heart of the seas; and the flood girt me round: all thy billows and thy waves have gone over me. 5. But I said, I am cast away from thy face; yet will I still look on thy holy temple. 6. Waters encompassed me to my very soul:

A great *fish*, LXX, N.T. κῆτος; on the other hand, Luther wrongly, whale; the latter does not frequent the Mediterranean Sea, and the swallowing of a whole man suggests rather the shark, which is a native there, and is furnished with far wider jaws. Of the giant shark (*squalus carcharias, L.*) it is well known that it swallows large bodies whole, so that enormous fishes, undevoured human corpses, an entire carcase of a horse, etc., have been found in it. That one who is swallowed remains alive is certainly, where it is not a question of a mere moment (as in the case mentioned in Keil, told by Linné), impossible according to "natural laws," but not at all more wonderful than that a Lazarus resisted corruption four days, or Christ Himself rose on the fourth day. As shown by the use of the same definition of time, *three days and three nights*, in the latter case, it is not to be punctiliously understood of seventy-two hours; but, according to Hebrew idiom, of a space of time reaching backward and forward beyond twenty-four hours. Moreover, who measured the hours in Jonah's case? Ver. 2. See on ver. 3. Ver. 3. The imperf. with ו consec. here and ver. 7 refers to something already experienced, not merely confidently expected. Ver. 7 especially shows that the supplicant has been already delivered from the deadly peril described; the prayer is therefore praise for deliverance experienced. As, however, the affliction and the feelings it caused are minutely depicted, the psalm certainly gives the contents of Jonah's prayer in the fish's belly.—מצרה לי, cf. Ps. xviii. 7, cxx. 1.—To Hades a בטן is here ascribed, which was suggested by the belly of the fish. Ver. 4*b*, as in Ps. xlii. 8. In Jonah's case the floods are literal, not merely figurative as there. Yet this does not necessarily imply that the psalm was later than Jonah's song, as Ewald supposes. Ver. 5, as in Ps. xxxi. 23. Ver. 6,

the abyss girt me round, reeds were wound about my head. 7. To the roots of the mountains I went down; the earth, its bars closed behind me for ever: then thou broughtest my life up from the pit, O Yahveh, my God. 8. When my soul languished within me I thought on Yahveh: then my prayer came to thee, to thy holy temple. 9. They who mind lying vanities forsake him who is their mercy. 10. But I will sacrifice to thee with loud thanksgiving; what I vowed I will perform. Salvation is Yahveh's! 11. Then Yahveh commanded the fish to vomit Jonah upon dry land.

III. 1. And the word of Yahveh came to Jonah the second time, thus: 2. Arise, go to Nineveh, the great city, and cry to it the preaching which I shall tell thee. 3. Then Jonah arose, and went to Nineveh, according to Yahveh's word; but Nineveh was a great city before God, a journey of three

Cf. Ps. lxix. 2. That the סוף growing at the bottom of the sea is wrapped round his head, shows how deep he was sunk and how fast he was held there. Ver. 7. לקצבי = לְקַצְוֵי, properly the cuttings, *i.e.* extreme ends. The roots of the mountains are thought of as at the bottom of the sea.—*For ever*, in appearance and outward circumstances. But God has worked a miracle; cf. 1 Sam. ii. 6. Ver. 9. Cf. Ps. xxxi. 7.—חסדם, cf. Ps. cxliv. 2. Ver. 10. ישעתה, fuller, more solemn form for ישועה, as in Ps. iii. 3.

Chapter III.

Ver. 2. Cf. ch. i. 2.—קראה, *κήρυγμα*. Ver. 3. *A great city to God*, according to the naive custom of bringing extraordinary things into connection with God, as if even God must perforce acknowledge its greatness; cf. Gen. x. 9.—*A course* (accus. of amount, Del.) of three days. Expositors wrongly dispute whether circumference (as the majority) or diameter (Hitzig) is meant. According to the context, where the matter is one of preaching to the inhabitants of the city, the meaning is, as ver. 4 shows, how much time it would take to visit the chief places of the great city Nineveh (in the broader sense, Schrader, ii. 147), which was divided into different quarters or towns. Its circumference, according to Jones, was almost 90 English miles, which would agree with a three days' journey. But Jonah needed the same time to go through the city (neither in a straight line, nor in its widest circumference). In any case the statement gives a not inaccurate idea of the

days. 4. And Jonah began to enter the city a tract of a day's march, and preached, and said: 5. Yet forty days, and Nineveh is overthrown!—Then the people of Nineveh believed in God, and proclaimed a fast, and clothed themselves in sackcloth, from the greatest among them to the least. 6. And the matter came to the king of Nineveh; then he arose up from his throne, and laid aside his robe, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat on ashes. 7. And he made proclamation, and commanded in Nineveh: By decree of the king and his nobles, as follows: Men and cattle, oxen and sheep, shall eat nothing: they shall not feed, nor drink water, 8. and shall be covered with sackcloth, men and cattle, and cry to God mightily; and turn, every one from his evil way, and from the wickedness which is in his hands. 9. Who knows whether God will turn and repent, and cease from his fierce wrath, that we perish not? 10. Then God saw what they did, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil which he had said he would do to them, and did it not.

IV. 1. But it displeased Jonah greatly, and he was angry. 2. And he prayed to Yahveh, and said: Ah, Yahveh, was it

magnitude of the city. Ver. 4 tells the first day's work. LXX, instead of forty, only three days! הפך, see on Amos iv. 11. Jonah could easily make himself intelligible to the Assyrians; cf. Isa. xxxvi. 11. Ver. 5. Penitent mourning; cf. Joel i. 13 f.—*From the greatest* . . . Ges. § 119, 2. Ver. 7. אמר, as in ch. ii. 11. The words of the crier, מטעם נו׳, *ex decreto regis* . . . announce the following edict. טעם, elsewhere taste, here decree. It is here the Assyr.-Bab. *ṭêmu*, royal decision, edict.—The *nobles* are the ministers. The *beasts* are here exhorted to join in the mourning, especially in fasting. An analogous case is when, according to Herod. ix. 24, the Persians after the fall of their commander clipped their horses' hair. Cf. also Plut. Alex. 72; Virg. *Ecl.* v. 24 ff. Ver. 9, like Joel ii. 14, cf. there, and in regard to God repenting, on Joel ii. 13. Ver. 10. Cf. also Ex. xxxii. 14.

Chapter IV.

Ver. 1. רעה נ׳ adds force to the idea of וירע; it seemed wrong to him, a very great wrong. Ver. 2. אנה, as in ch. i. 14. *Was*

not this which I thought when I was still in my country? For this very reason I was beforehand in fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that thou art a God, gracious and compassionate, slow to wrath, and rich in mercy, and who repents him of the evil. 3. And now, Yahveh, I pray, take my soul from me; for it is better for me to die than to live. 4. Then said Yahveh, Doest thou well to be angry? 5. Then Jonah went forth from the city, and sat on the east of the city, and made himself there a hut, and sat under it in the shade, till he should see what became of the city. 6. Then God appointed a ricinus-plant to grow over Jonah, to make a shade over his head to deliver him from his affliction; then Jonah rejoiced

not this my word, i.e. my thought? כי אתה נו׳, like Joel ii. 13, see there. Ver. 3. Cf. 1 Kings xix. 4. This displeasure of Jonah, as well as the distrust which he had from the first about the mission to Nineveh, is explained, not merely from the fact that he foresaw that on the people's repentance pardon would follow, and so, outwardly regarded, the non-fulfilment of his word, instead of the execution of the judgment, a result which in the end the prophets of Yahveh perforce expected in every utterance of doom, but chiefly from the fact that he grudged such pardon to the heathen Ninevites. Ver. 4. God's monitory question, *Art thou justly angry?* is meant to bring him to reason. It is an ignoble, unbecoming motive which makes him angry. Ver. 5. Jonah prepares to await the end in a place where he can see the city, and yet not be involved in its ruin. The forty days are not yet expired. That Yahveh has given up His purpose (iii. 10) the prophet knew; yet he hoped secretly, perhaps the Lord will still enter into judgment with the city (even were it on his complaint!). Ver. 6. מנה, Piel here and vv. 7, 8, as in ii. 1.—קיקיון, erroneously LXX; Itala, *gourd;* Vulg. *ivy*, is, as Jerome early knew, the *ricinus-plant;* Egyptian, *kíki*; Assyrian, *kûkânîtu* (usually derived from קוא, to spit; according to Fr. Delitzsch, rather from Assyr. קוק, *to wind round*), a common plant now with us, large-leaved, and shooting up in a few days, adapted to shade a hut consisting of a simple wood frame (although not to be thought of as creeping up it), and easily withering on any injury to the tender stalk. —*From his affliction*, namely, the heat of the sun beating heavily on him, probably aggravating his ill-will, so that in consequence of the surprise prepared for him by the ricinus,

in the ricinus exceedingly. 7. But God appointed a worm when the morning of the next day dawned; it smote the ricinus that it withered. 8. And it came to pass when the sun arose, that God appointed a sultry east-wind, and the sun smote on Jonah's head, that he languished. Then he wished for his soul to die, and said: It were better for me to die than to live. 9. Then spake God to Jonah: Doest thou well to be angry for the ricinus? And he said: I do well to be angry unto death. 10. Then said Yahveh: Thou art sorry for the ricinus, for which thou didst not labour, and which thou didst not make to grow, which grew as a child of a night, and perished as a child of a night. 11. And should I not be sorry for Nineveh, the great city, in which are more than twelve myriad persons, who cannot distinguish between their right hand and their left, and so many cattle?

his feelings were quite changed. Ver. 7. נכה, Hiphil, used here of a worm gnawing, as in ver. 8 of the stroke of the sun. Ver. 8. The reference is to a scorching wind (as in Hos. xiii. 15), which gave the last blow to the sickly plant; therefore חרישי, moist, sultry, not "cutting, sharp," which would have tempered the oppressive heat.—עלף, Hithp., as in Amos viii. 13.—*And he desired* . . . construction as in 1 Kings xix. 4. The logical subject of the dying is anticipated as the object of the wish; cf. ver. 3. Ver. 9. Cf. ver. 4. This time Jonah thinks that, robbed of his last comfort, he has the fullest right to complain; hence his confident answer, giving, however, the Lord the means in his answer of putting him to shame. Ver. 10. The ricinus has no claim on Jonah's affection, founded on cherished sympathy and long-continued attention such as God had lavished on this great city.—בֵּן, rare conjunctive form for בֵּן. Ver. 11. Twelve myriads = 120,000 human beings, not knowing the difference of right and left, therefore children of the tenderest age, who as yet have done no wrong, as little as the many animals which also would have to die without fault of theirs. The designation of child is usually extended to the seventh year of age (whether rightly is questionable; Hitzig stops at the third); the entire population of Nineveh is thus reckoned at 600,000 souls, by no means an improbable number, but in comparison with the intention of the narrator perhaps put too low.—The *much cattle* being thought of shows in a touching way God's love for all His creatures.

Exposition.

Contents: The Mission of Jonah to Nineveh. 1. The Miscarriage of his attempt to flee, ch. i.; 2. Jonah in the fish's belly, ch. ii.; 3. His Preaching in Nineveh and its success, ch. iii.; 4. Jonah's Sullenness thereat is rebuked, ch. iv.

Jonah, the eminent prophet in the northern kingdom of Israel, receives from his God a surprising commission to carry a message of divine admonition to the heathen metropolis, Nineveh, the ancient and well-known capital of the Assyrian empire, which at that time was more and more coming to the front, to the peril of the Israelites. He tries to avoid this unwelcome mission, for the reason confessed in ch. iv. 2. "When he has to announce victorious enlargement to the kingdom of Israel (2 Kings xiv. 25), he is Yahveh's obedient servant; but to preach repentance among the heathen seems to him (and his prognostication is right) a transference of Yahveh's favour to the heathen" (Delitzsch). Although he knows and acknowledges his God to be the Creator of the universe (ch. i 9), he does not think escape from Him impossible, as in this prophet—a true type of the Judaism which transfers its own limitation and narrow-mindedness to God—a strange ignorance of God's government is united with right views of His nature, as if His presence, when revealed, was still only to be seen at work in the Holy Land (cf. on ch. i. 3). But he is speedily convinced that this hope of fleeing from God is a delusion. A terrible storm overtakes him. The frightened seamen rouse him from sleep, and exhort him (they, the heathen!) to pray to his God, and so awaken his conscience, although no confession of sin follows. This is only wrung from him by the lot marking him out as a criminal with whom heaven is wroth. Now he confesses who his God is, and what God has against him. Thus he involuntarily becomes a missionary to the heathen, making them acquainted with the true God. The fact that the sea does not cease

raging until they, after long conflict with themselves and the rebellious elements, decide to cast him into the sea in obedience to the advice of Yahveh's prophet, but is then at once calm, confirms the impression which they receive of the greatness and holiness of God, unknown to them hitherto.

But the disobedient prophet, who has reluctantly become their instructor, must descend into the depths of the abyss, not, however, to die until he has carried out God's will, since the Lord will not allow His plans to be crossed by man. An immense fish becomes his prison and place of safety. The God who controls wind and waves (ch. i. 4, iv. 8), plants (iv. 6) and beasts (iv. 7), and whom they serve, orders a gigantic fish to swallow him, and vomit him alive on dry land after three days. What Jonah's feelings were in the abyss and after his deliverance from the pit of death, the psalm says (see Introd. p. 168), in which he praises the God who wondrously rescued him, when to all appearance he was irretrievably lost. No express confession of his sin is found in the psalm. But his turning to Yahveh after what he has experienced, and seeking His help, is a sure sign of his change of mind. And this is confirmed by the fact that, directly after his rescue, he goes to Nineveh on God's repeated command without further resistance. There he proclaims the destruction coming on the imperial city by God's judgment. The Assyrians, who were very observant of and attentive to portents and remarkable signs, must have been powerfully impressed by this messenger of a strange God, who, without being afraid of mockery or violence, proclaimed to all his message of doom, and whose whole appearance and bearing must certainly have been impressed with the stamp of piercing earnestness by his recent experiences. The success, in fact, was complete, at least for the moment. The inhabitants of the heathen capital, despite their habitual frivolity, understood quite well for what reason such a judgment was announced to them. And every one, from the king to the lowest subject, even to the beast in

the stall, went into mourning and repented, in order to avert the ruin. In consequence of this the Lord decided to spare the city, as the prophet soon became aware.

But instead of rejoicing at this, Jonah was sullen and angry, nay, so vexed as to be weary of life. His declaration in ch. iv. 2, by reference backward to ch. i. 1–3, forms the link binding together the whole book, and also showing us the motive which pervades the whole. This very spirit, which denies all grace to the heathen (see Introd.), must be met first by God's mighty arm, which compels the unwilling to subserve His saving purpose, and then in ch. iv. inwardly by rebuke founded on Jonah's sympathy with a mere plant. Fine psychological observation is shown in the circumstance that Jonah, in the midst of his prophetic indignation, is reconciled to life again by a bit of shade given him unexpectedly by the ricinus, and again that he is in utter despair when this slight refreshment of life is withdrawn from him. But His servants, with their unrighteous antipathies and their irrational lack of love, are put to shame by the Lord, whose loving providence and heartfelt sympathy embrace even the countless heathen, so that for the sake of their many children, who have done no wrong, and their cattle, which are irresponsible, He does not desire their death, but that they may turn and live. Here a chord is powerfully struck, which is frequently heard in the New Testament; cf. beside Matt. xii. 38 ff., Luke xi. 29 ff., also Matt. xx. 15 f., xxi. 28–31; Acts x. 34, etc.

MICAH.

Introduction.

The name of the prophet, מִיכָה (LXX: *Μιχαίας*; Vulg.: Michæas), is an abbreviation for מִיכָיָה (so he is called in Jer. xxvi. 18, Kethib); and this = מִיכָיָהוּ (2 Chron. xvii. 7), along with which also מִיכָיְהוּ occurs (1 Kings xxii. 8). It signifies "Who is like Yahveh?" Cf. מִיכָאֵל. In ch. i. 1, as also in Jer. xxvi. 18, the prophet is called המרשתי, indicating the place of his birth. Without doubt the reference is to the Moresheth-Gath mentioned by himself in ch. i. 14, *i.e.* the Moresheth found in the neighbourhood of the Philistine town of Gath. Eusebius and Jerome knew a tradition, according to which it lay not far to the east of Eleutheropolis. No particulars are known of the prophet's personality. Certain Church Fathers could only identify him with the son of Imlah of the same name (1 Kings xxii.) by a mistake in chronology. Cf. respecting the relation to the latter on ch. i. 2.

The heading in ch. i. 1 gives as the prophet's time the reign of the kings Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah. The similarity of this statement to those found in Hos. i. 1, Isa. i. 1, in both which passages certainly Uzziah precedes, raises the suspicion that it may come from the same hand that revised Hos. i. 1. In its last part the statement is confirmed by the remarkable reference in Jer. xxvi. 18, according to which the threat of Micah iii. 12 was uttered under Hezekiah. Because now the latter passage is closely linked with the preceding part from ch. ii. (for we do not, like many expositors, make ch. iii. 1 begin a new discourse, see on ch. ii. 12 f.), it is probable that

Micah's activity began first under this king. But in any case ch. i. falls, not only before the destruction of Samaria, but also earlier than the serious beginning of Hezekiah's reform in worship (ch. i. 5). If the latter be put, according to 2 Chron. xxix., into the first year of this king's reign, this first accusing discourse is, in fact, somewhat earlier, whilst chs. ii.–v. fall into Hezekiah's days, and, indeed, into the first days after the fall, or at least the investment, of Samaria, as its fate has been sealed, on which account it is no longer specially noticed. That the purifying of the worship was not thoroughly carried out is shown by ch. v. 11 ff. The gloomy picture in chs. vi., vii. suggest Manasseh's days to our mind, which ch. vi. 16 would suit specially well; and it is possible that Micah added this piece at that time. But Isaiah shows that even under Hezekiah's rule there was occasionally much to complain of. Moreover, an exact dating of these several oracles is impossible, because Micah obviously wrote them down later in consecutive form, bringing them together in a beautifully finished book.

In regard to the integrity of the book, certainly the originality of particular sayings or of entire sections is contested by several critics in modern days; but, as it seems to us, these attacks are without sufficient ground. The passage, ch. ii. 12 f., according to Ewald, was noted down originally by Micah himself or an old reader only on the margin. Stade regards it as an exilic or post-exilic interpolation. That the desired connection, however, is not wanting, see *in loc.* The question of ch. iv. 1 ff., which verses coincide almost verbally with Isa. ii. 2 ff., is of another kind. Since the majority of critics find the form of the text more original in Micah and the connection closer than in Isaiah, while, on the other hand, they place Isa. ii.–iv. before Hezekiah, many (Ewald, Hitzig, Nöldeke, Kuenen, Reuss, Cheyne, *et al.*) make the oracle originate with an older prophet, and in both places where we find it, make it to be borrowed, which is not in itself impos-

sible, and in any case is the most suitable expedient. This explanation may be accepted, supposing the later Micah to have preserved it in a more original form than Isaiah. Others suppose that it was simply tacked on to the book of Isaiah by the compilers; on the other hand, it is to be regarded as original in Micah, and the latter as the author. So in recent days Ryssel especially. We cannot, however, agree with him. The differences of style here have no great weight, as they may be explained in favour of either side. The main question is whether Micah iv. 4 f. was originally part of the oracle. We are compelled to answer in the negative. Ver. 4, which is said to give a conclusion indispensable to the rounding off of the whole (Hitzig, Reuss), on the contrary departs from the tenor of the preceding oracle, embellishing it with current forms of speech. If we simply ask, who is the subject of וישבו (plainly not the heathen nations as in the previous sentence, but the individual Israelites, as well as in ch. v. 3 !), we shall see that the connection is a very loose one. In the same way, the phrase in ver. 4*b*, כי פי יי צ' ד', which is not usual in Micah for the mere strengthening of his own words, suggests the recalling of a divine saying uttered before. Ver. 5 also departs from the thought of ver. 1 ff., to which passage an opposition between the nations going their own way in the name of their gods and Israel in eternal alliance with Yahveh is foreign, whereas the briefer admonition of Isa. ii. 5 quite corresponds with what goes before. Micah has indeed fitted the oracle into his order of thought, but in such a way that the independence of the oracle is still quite clear; and indeed he must have found it already existing in the extent which it has in Isaiah, whether it springs from the latter or from an older prophet.

In Micah iv. 10, Nöldeke, Kuenen, Cheyne, Nowack would strike out the words בבל ובאת עד as a later interpolation. But see *in loc.* The entire section, chs. iv., v., is denied to be Micah's by Stade, according to whom only chs. i.–iii.

(exclusive of ii. 12 f.) are said to belong to this prophet. Chs. iv., v. (more precisely iv. 1–4, 11–14, v. 1–3, 6–14) are pronounced post-exilic, and interpolated by a later writer, *Zeitschr. f. altt. Wissensch.* 1881, p. 161 ff.; cf. 1883, p. 1 ff. See, on the other hand, Kautzsch, *ZDMG.* 1882, p. 696 f.; Nowack in the first-named *Zeitschr.* 1884, p. 277 ff., and especially Ryssel (see below), p. 248 ff. Stronger doubt is thrown on the authenticity of chs. vi., vii., which Ewald makes to have been written by a later prophet in the time of Manasseh, who had a peculiar dramatic style. Wellhausen (in Bleek's *Altt. Einl.*, 4 Aufl.) distinguished between chs. vi., vii. 1–6, which, according to him, belong to the time of Manasseh, and vii. 7–20, which, a full century later, presuppose the fall of Jerusalem. The latter view is adopted by Nowack, Stade. Nöldeke, Steiner, *et al.*, have declared against the cogency of the proofs adduced for a different author from Micah. See especially Ryssel, p. 268 ff., where it is shown that these chapters contain nothing in form or matter which necessitates such a critical excision. Even if they sprang from the days of Manasseh, which, however, is doubtful enough, Micah might very well be the author. But the fall of Jerusalem, like its restoration, is a prophetic certainty to the author; it does not lie behind him. Nor are there wanting many points of contact between this last part and the other parts of the book. The book is a well articulated whole, certainly arranged by the author himself; its subdivisions, chs. i. and ii., iii. and iv., v. and vi., vii., grow out of particular discourses of the prophet, not, however, without connection among themselves, as is most plainly observable between chs. iii. and iv.

The contents of the book show close religious affinity with Isaiah. Like the latter prophet, Micah bore witness, in the strength of God's Spirit, against the heathenish hill-worship and image-worship current, not only in Samaria, but also in Judæa and even in Jerusalem, as well as against other heathen

practices which Hezekiah was able to suppress for a short time only; cf. ch. i. 5–7, v. 11–13. But, in particular, he meets with sharp rebuke social injustice, the exploiting and ill-treatment of the poor by the great and mighty, to whom venal judges were subservient, and whom false prophets flattered, cf. ii. 1 ff., iii. 2 f., 10 f.; dishonesty in trade and commerce, vi. 10 ff.; treachery and irreligion in all, even the most sacred, relations (vii. 2 ff.). While in these charges he is in perfect agreement with his great contemporary Isaiah, there is absent in his case the discussion of foreign politics, whereas it was part of Isaiah's calling to call the princes to account about their attitude to the great powers. On account of these grave offences he predicts severe judgment through the heathen world-power, but in doing this has to contend at every step with false prophets, who always promise good when they are rewarded for doing so, and therefore are more gladly listened to by the people than the genuine, incorruptible, and inflexible messengers of the true God, cf. chs. ii., iii. In glaring contrast with these self-confident praters, Micah utters in still more precise terms than Isaiah his threat of doom (analogies are not wanting in Isaiah, see *Comm.* p. 10), to the effect that the invasion of the heathen will lead to the overthrow of Jerusalem and the removal of its inhabitants to Babylon, iii. 12, iv. 10, 14. His courage in doing this was unforgetable (Jer. xxvi. 18). His not speaking of the temporary respite by the Assyrians, or the destruction of the army of Sennacherib before Jerusalem (as ch. iv. 11–13 is scarcely to be referred to this) is explained by the circumstance that we have no oracles of his belonging to that time, when Isaiah rather stood alone in the foreground. But Micah also announces the return from exile in Babylon, as well as the setting up of a theocracy surpassing the old one in splendour, having its centre on Zion and its human head in the peerless, long-expected Davidite. Of his glorious and peace-bringing government a most lovely picture is sketched in ch. v. 1 ff.

The kingdom, thus purified and strengthened, will have no need to fear the last, wildest assault of the heathen, but will triumph over them with the help of its God, iv. 11–13. In force of spirit, in purity and depth of religious knowledge, Micah shows himself the equal of Isaiah, to whom also he is not inferior in dignity of style and bold use of language. If his field of work is more limited, he has, on the other hand, a skill in drawing lovely, idyllic pictures, and especially a deep personal sympathy, expressing itself in mournful strains, which reminds us of Jeremiah rather than of Isaiah.

Of special discussions of Micah may be mentioned: C. P. Caspari, *Ueber Micha den Morasthiten und seine prophetische Schrift*, 1851. T. Roorda, *Comm. in vaticinium Michæ*, 1869. L. Reinke (Cath.), *Der Prophet Micha*, 1874. T. K. Cheyne, *Micah, with Notes and Introduction*, 1882. V. Ryssel, *Untersuchungen über die Textgestalt und die Echtheit des Buches Micha*, 1887.

Judgment upon Samaria and Judah, Ch. i.

1. The word of Yahveh which came to Micah of Moresheth, in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw respecting Samaria and Jerusalem.

2. Hear, ye peoples, altogether! Listen, thou earth, and

Chapter I.

Ver. 1. On the name and person of *Micah*, as well as on the date, see Introd.—אשר חזה נו׳ indicates, as in Amos i. 1, the goal to which his discourses are mainly directed; first the capital of the northern kingdom, then the sacred city of David. On *seeing* the word, see comm. on Isa. ii. 1. Ver. 2. *All ye peoples*, does not apply to the tribes of Israel (so Hitz., Steiner, after Deut. xxxii. 8, *et al.*); for ארץ ומלאה is a long established form for the whole earth, not merely the land; cf. Deut. xxxiii. 16; Ps. xxiv. 1.—But בכם applies, not to the nations of the earth summoned rhetorically to listen, but to the Israel of the present mentioned in the heading, and now to be accused, against which Yahveh appears as a hostile

that which fills it! And let the Lord Yahveh be for a witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple. 3. For, behold, Yahveh goes forth from his place, and comes down, and walks upon the high places of the earth. 4. And the mountains melt under him, and the plains are cleft, like wax before the fire, like water falling down a steep. 5. Because of the backsliding of Jacob is all this, and because of the sin of the house of Israel. What is the backsliding of Jacob? is

witness or accuser.—*From His holy temple*, applies not to the earthly, but to the heavenly dwelling of God, as ver. 3 shows, which is also important for Isa. vi. 1.—As the first words of the verse are found also in 1 Kings xxii. 28 in the mouth of the older Micah ben Imlah (with whom several Church Fathers confound our prophet), Hitzig, Klostermann, Kleinert think that our later Micah took up that saying of his namesake, as also references to the history of the latter are found elsewhere in his book (cf. 1 Kings xxii. 11, 22 f., 24, with Micah ii. 11, iv. 13 f.). Conversely, Steiner holds the whole narrative, 1 Kings xxii., to be dependent on Micah's book. But the only word showing affinity in a striking way: שמעו עמים כ׳, is scarcely original in 1 Kings xxii. 28, where it is wanting in the LXX (so also Klost. *in loc.*), and is first certainly found in the Chronicles in that narrative,—therefore to be regarded as a gloss there, and as original in the present passage. Similarly Ryssel, p. 219 f. Ver. 3. הנה with partic. expresses the fut. instans. As to ver. 3*b*, see on Amos iv. 13. Ver. 4. The majestic appearance of the Lord coming to judgment is described in terms borrowed from His appearance in tempest on Sinai, which is also typical for Judg. v. 4 ff., Ps. xviii., and Hab. iii. The comparison, "like wax before the fire" (cf. Ps. lxviii. 2), belongs to the first member: the mountains melt. The second comparison, "like water rushing down (cf. the active Hiphil, ver. 6) a steep," applies to the second member: the plains part asunder. In consequence of heavy rain a waterfall, so to speak, is formed, which rushes headlong down where was level, firm ground. So everything gives way before the approach of God; everywhere dissolution, overthrow, turmoil! Ver. 5. So terribly does God draw near as avenger because of sin. Jacob and house of Israel here synonymous.—The crime of Jacob is its chief city. Because this, the heart of the land, is all sin, the hurt is so great.—The *high places*, i.e. forbidden worship-sites of *Judah*, identical with *Jerusalem*, which is no longer

it not Samaria? and what are the high places of Judah? is it not Jerusalem? 6. So then I make Samaria a rubbish-heap of the field, vineyard plantings; and I throw down her stones into the valley, and her foundations I lay bare. 7. And all her idol-images shall be hewn down, and all her harlot-gifts burned in the fire, and all her carved pillars I lay waste: for she gathered them by harlot's hire, and harlot's hire they shall again become.

8. For these things I will wail and howl; will go stripped and naked; will set up a wail like the jackals, and a lament like the young ostriches. 9. For her stripes are desperate; for it reaches to Judah: it comes to the door of my people,

God's favourite dwelling, but the gathering-point of idolatrous altars, so to speak, a common idol-height. The reformation of Hezekiah (in his fifth year) has therefore not yet taken place. Ver. 6. Literal fulfilment: On the declivities of the hill, which once bore the proud city, lie ruins, which bear witness to former splendour. See Orelli, *Durchs heil. Land*, p. 187. Ver. 7. אתנניה, which signifies, firstly, according to the context, love-gifts which she gave to illegitimate gods, therefore sacred offerings which she established for them. This fate is justified (כִּי) by the impure origin of these gifts. She has got the means for them from *a harlot's reward*, which is to be explained according to Hos. ii. 7, the Jewish prophet alluding to the description of the Ephraimite one: She regarded her gain as a gift of the gods, therefore it was a harlot's hire, and was used accordingly (cf. Hos. ii. 10).—*They shall become a harlot's hire again*, i.e. fall a prey to the fate appropriate to such impure wealth. But probably there is special reference to the fact that these treasures will be devoted again by heathen peoples (Asshur) to their idols. Ver. 8. The irregular *scriptio plena* אילכה is perhaps meant to suggest the rhythm with ואילילה: in the same way the vocalisation שָׁיְלָל instead of שׁוֹלָל (Keri), which is not merely barefoot, but stripped of all ornamental attire. This appearance, a sign of sorrow, somewhat different in Isa. xx. 2, 4. *Jackals* compared on account of their howling, *ostriches* on account of their plaintive, groaning noise; both together also in Job xxx. 29. Ver. 9. The stripes inflicted on Samaria are incurable (cf. for the phrase, Jer. xv. 18); what gives the prophet special ground of sorrow is that the enemy's ravages penetrate even into Judah, up to the gate of his people, *i.e.* where his people assemble; therefore, as is added in explanation:

to Jerusalem. 10. In Gath (news-city) publish it not! At Acco (weeping-field) weep not! At Beth-ophra (dust-house) I roll myself in the dust! 11. Away with you, inhabitant of Shaphir (ornament-city) in shameful nakedness; the inhabitant of Zaanan (march) cannot go forth. Wailing is at Beth-ezel (neighbouring house); from you he takes up his position. 12. For the inhabitant of Maroth (bitter woe) travails for good; because evil comes down from Yahveh to

up to Jerusalem. Ver. 10. The prophet fears the malignant rejoicing of the Philistines in *Gath*, which is near to his native place; the mention of Gath is suggested to him also by 2 Sam. i. 20.—בכו, not infin. abs., but, according to Reland, for בעכו, perhaps to be read בַּכּוֹ (ע being smoothed away to increase the rhythm), *at Acco*-Ptolemais, in which Canaanitish city the Israelitish fugitives are not to weep, as they would thus only excite the malignant scorn of the heathen. So nearly all moderns, except Keil and Ryssel. בית לעפרה for עָפְרָה, to rhyme with עָפָר, is perhaps the Benjamite Ophra, Josh. xviii. 23. The town is chosen for the sake of its name, which suits the writer's purpose here. לְ in לעפרה, sign of the genitive (Hitz., Ryssel). פלש, Hithp., *to roll oneself* in dust or ashes, sign of mourning. Mourners actually sprinkled their heads with these (1 Sam. iv. 12), and also sat on the ground in dust or ashes (Job ii. 8, 12 f.). Keri reads wrongly, as in Jer. vi. 26, as if the inhabitants were addressed. Ver. 11. The population of the town שפיר, beautiful in its name (indeed an easy modification of שמיר, Josh. xv. 48, in the hill country of Judah), must go forth without ornament and captive, after the manner of Isa. xx. 4.—In *nakedness*, which is a disgrace. Hitzig compares ענוה צדק, Ps. xlv. 5.—The population of צאנן, whose town has its name from going out, may not go out, but must keep their gates shut. It may be the Çĕnān, mentioned in Josh. xv. 37, in the Judæan lowland. בית האצל, probably the village Azel, mentioned in Zech. xiv. 2, situated on the Mount of Olives, therefore in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem, which Micah indeed intimates by the appellation. We read מִסְפֵּד (absol.), and refer the last words to the enemy, who takes his stand from there, namely against Jerusalem. Corresponding to עמדה is עמד, Isa. x. 32. Ver. 12. The unhappy *Maroth*, an ominous name, *travails*, i.e. looks in bitter longing (cf. elsewhere the Hiphil of חול) *for* some *good*. The locality is unknown, and is also to be sought near Jerusalem. רע is in contrast

the gate of Jerusalem. 13. Bind the chariot to the swift steed, inhabitant of Lachish (race-city)! The beginning of sin was this to the daughter of Zion: that in thee were found the iniquities of Israel. 14. Therefore must thou issue a bill of divorce against Moresheth-Gath; the (two) Beth Achsib (house of lies) become a deceitful brook to the kings of Israel. 15. Again I bring to thee the conqueror, O inhabitant of Mareshah (conquest). The nobility of Israel

with טוב. The *gate of Jerusalem*, echo of ver. 9. Ver. 13. The motto לרכיש points at the name לכיש. The population of this town, *Lachish* (according to Josh. xv. 39, situated in the Judæan lowland; according to Euseb. *Onomast.*, 7 Roman miles from Eleutheropolis, to-day Umm Lakis, half-way between Beth Jibrin, Eleutheropolis, and Gaza), is to flee as fast as possible, as it is threatened with retribution of exceptional severity, because from it the North-Israelitish corruption, notably idolatry and other similar religious evils (ver. 5), have penetrated into Judah. Further particulars unknown. Ver. 14. The daughter of Zion is addressed; she must issue a *bill of divorce* (cf. Jer. iii. 8) against *Moresheth* near Gath, the prophet's native town (see Introd. p. 185), *i.e.* renounce authority over this border town, which without doubt was often a subject of strife (cf. 1 Sam. vii. 14). The prophet adopts this mode of description because of the name מורשת, which has a sound of מְאוֹרָשֶׂת, the betrothed (Deut. xxii. 23), an allusion more poetical than the more obvious interpretation "possession." The thought is similar in the following clause, where, however, we must not with most expositors translate "the houses of Achsib," but the (two) *Beth Achsib*. Ewald is right as to the meaning. One belonged to the Jewish lowland (Josh. xv. 44, now Kesaba, five hours south-west from Beth Jibrin), the other to the Phœnician lowland north of Acco (now Zîb, in the classics Ecdippa; cf. Bædeker-Socin, 2 ed. 322). The latter a border place of the northern kingdom. Hence the *kings of Israel*, i.e. of Israel and Judah, suffer deception from these two cities, as from such a brook; cf. Job vi. 12 ff.; Jer. xv. 18.

Ver. 15. *Mareshah*, according to Euseb. 2 miles from Eleutheropolis, to-day Merâsh, south of Beth Jibrin. The name מורשה, taking possession, conquest, perhaps reminded of the capture by the Israelites (Joshua); but once more the name is to be proved true, and in a fatal way.—אבי for אביא

will come to Adullam. 16. Make thee bald, and poll thee for the children of thy delight; make thy baldness broad like a vulture's; for they are carried off from thee.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. i. Judgment upon Samaria and Judah: 1. The Judge's Approach, vv. 2–7; 2. The Seer's Complaint, vv. 8–16.

This first discourse, which was spoken at all events before Samaria's fall (see p. 185), describes first the judicial advent of the Lord, who comes to punish the idol-worship of this city (vv. 2–7). Moreover, Judah cannot go unpunished, because it also is defiled with impure hill-worship, nay the cultus in Jerusalem itself has become heathen in character (ver. 5). Thus, then, the seer, in his prophetic lament over the fate of his country, vv. 8–16, sees the enemy, *i.e.* the Assyrians, penetrating as far as the gate of his people, to Jerusalem (ver. 9). The apostrophes to the cities, ver. 10 ff., recall Isaiah's manner, Isa. x. 28 ff. In Micah also there is throughout a play on the meaning of the names, an ill omen being deduced from them. Nay, it seems as if Micah were led to the naming of the particular localities chiefly by the names

as in 1 Kings xxi. 29.—Up to (עד, to form a play on the name) *Adullam* the *nobility*, the higher class of Israel, will come. The reference is to the cave of Adullam, where David lay hid, and bankrupt runaways (opposite to כבוד!) gathered about him, 1 Sam. xxii. 1 f. The site of the cave is uncertain. Tradition points to a labyrinth-like cave south-east of Bethlehem, near the village Charêtûn. Another opinion seeks it farther west, in the present ʿAidelmiye, in the neighbourhood of the village Shuwêke (the ancient Socho, Josh. xv. 35). See Bædeker-Socin, 2 ed. 144, 212. Ver. 16. After the misfortune of Israel-Judah has been thus described in regard to twelve cities, the prophet turns with an apostrophe to the mother Israel herself.—*Shaving* in mourning, see Comm. on Jer. xvi. 6. Baldness on the back of the head is a mark of the *vulture*, not the eagle. נשר signifies both. Riehm, *Handb. Altt.* 28.

easily lending themselves to such interpretations. No such sharply defined route presents itself here as Isaiah has before him. Yet the first towns named are some in the hill-country of Judah which the enemy crosses in advancing from Samaria to Jerusalem; next follow those in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem; then principally localities in the Judæan lowland bordering on the Philistine country, which district, as the prophet's home, awakens his special sympathy. Here every one is in flight, and the country is lost to the rule of Jerusalem (ver. 14 f.). On the other hand, nothing is said of a destruction of the capital. But the country must see many of its people go into captivity.

Against the False Comfort of uncalled Prophets, Chs. II., III.

II. 1. Woe to those who devise mischief, and set wickedness afoot on their beds: when the morning breaks, they carry it out, for it is in the power of their hand. 2. And when they lust after fields, they seize them; and after houses, they take them away: and they oppress the strong man in

Chapter II.

Ver. 1. *Woe;* cf., as to form and matter, Isa. v. 8, 11, etc.— יש לאל ידם, to be explained, not after Hab. i. 11, but after Gen. xxxi. 29: it belongs to, stands within the full power (אֵל in this phrase rather neuter in sense) of their hand. They are the mighty, powerful ones, who are allowed to commit every sort of evil in open day. Ver. 2. According to Ex. xx. 17, even the desire that covets a neighbour's property is grievous sin; but they do not stop at that, but go on at once to the act. "It is transgression of the law made for the protection of landed property and ancestral right (Lev. xxv. 23 ff.), by slaughtering property and harrying peasants, which the prophet denounces in the severest terms, like his contemporary Isaiah (ch. v. 8 ff.), because this is the surest way to the creation of a hopeless proletariat, to a hostile severance of those who have and those who have not (Neh. v. 1 ff.), and, consequently, to the ruin of the national wellbeing and the populace" (Kleinert). וביתו and

his house, and the man in his inheritance! 3. Therefore, thus says Yahveh: Behold, I design evil against this family, from which you shall not be able to withdraw your neck, nor shall you walk haughtily; for this is an evil time. 4. In that day men will take up a parable against you, and sing a lament. It has come to pass!—men will say—we are utterly overwhelmed: he changes the portion of my people; how it vanishes from me! He assigns our fields to the rebellious. 5. "For this thou shalt have no one to cast a measuring-line on a lot in the congregation of Yahveh!" 6. "Preach ye not," they preach. Should not one preach to such? Should not the revilings depart? 7. Is (this) the talk of the house

ונחלתו indicate the form which the oppression of the man took. The one is wronged in his house, the other in his field. As an illustration, cf. 1 Kings xxi. Ver. 3. חשב corresponds to חשבי, ver. 1.—מושם . . . אשר; the evil is represented as a hard yoke; cf. Hos. x. 11.—רומה, properly = loftily, so with high-stretched neck. Ver. 4. The משל is in the mouth of the malignant foe, the נהי in that of some one belonging to the nation. אמר also with indefinite subject, but meant of the latter.—נהיה, it has happened, befallen, the unspeakable and intolerable! It would be easier, instead of this, to join בְּנָהִי (cf. LXX) with the next (Vollers). But the text would be far tamer.—נשדנו, Niph., 1 plur. of שדד, therefore for נְשַׁדְנוּ.—מור, Hiphil, to cause the possessor to change, to give it to another possessor; most old versions read, wrongly, ימיד or ימוד (see Ryssel, 44).—*To the rebellious one*, i.e. the heathen. Strangers seize Ephraim's territory; hence the later contempt for the Samaritans, who were a mixed people.—Complete transformation of the text in Stade, *Altt. Zeitschr.* 1886, p. 122. Ver. 5. Rightly taken by Hitzig as a curse of the opponents against the prophet. He is to die without offspring. Ver. 6. These optimistic opponents are here spoken of. They would forbid Micah speaking (נטף, Hiphil; see on Amos vii. 16), while they themselves preach: "Preach not!" To this the prophet replies in the two clauses, with לא in interrogative form: What? *Shall not one preach to such*, as were described in ver. 1 ff.? *Shall not the reproaches*—namely, against the true prophets of God and His word, of which an example in ver. 5—*depart* (סוג, Niph.)? Otherwise Hitzig, who puts these words still into the mouth of the false prophets. Ver. 7. A further objection, which may be

of Jacob: "Could Yahveh be so impatient, or were these his deeds?" Are not my words friendly with him who walks uprightly? 8. But yesterday my people rose up as an enemy: you pluck the robe from off the raiment from those who passed by innocently, averse from war. 9. You drove away the women of my people from the house of their pleasure; from their little ones you took away my mark of honour for ever. 10. Up and away with you! Here there is no rest because of the pollution which brings destruction, yea grievous destruction.

heard in Jacob, is dismissed. The ה in האמור is interrogative. *Is the talk* of the house of Jacob such? Then let this serve as answer. The talk consists in a double question, with which they confront the prophet: *Is Yahveh then so unfriendly,* as these dark threatenings intimate? Is He not rather well known as longsuffering (see on Joel ii. 13)? Or, *are these*—namely, forsaking His people in difficulties—*His great deeds?* The Lord Himself gives the answer, pointing to the indispensable ethical condition on which alone, of course, His words can produce good. ישר הלך, in form same as in Job xxxi. 26; but here the art. is added to the adjective, because it more easily joins on to it. Ver. 8 f. affirms that this condition is not found in His people, who, on the contrary, even recently have been guilty of the grossest offences.—ואתמול, usually rendered: long before (cf. Isa. xxx. 33); but this *yesterday* points rather to the most recent past, when misdeeds like those here related must have taken place (so also Kleinert, Keil): plunder of fellow-countrymen passing harmlessly along, and driving out widows and orphans from house and home. Hitzig prefers to think of those belonging to the northern kingdom, who fled from the war there and passed through Judæa, and to whom the order was given: קומו ולכו. The first words he then translates: "But one (?) took his stand as foe against (ואת מול) my people." But after ver. 7 especially, ver. 8 needs a subject. And the עבריר are not represented as fugitives. The expelled women and disinherited children may be harshly-treated widows and orphans, who were compelled to migrate, the children being thus robbed of the glory of Yahveh, *i.e.* of the honour of being citizens among Yahveh's people. Ver. 10. An angry command to the criminals: לא זאת ה', literally as in Isa. xxviii. 12, but in this connection to be taken in a more local sense than there; so that זאת applies to the country, which,

11. If one pursued the wind and lied deceit: "I will preach to thee in wine and strong drink"—this would be a preacher of this people: 12. "Verily I will gather thee, Jacob, together; I will certainly collect the remnant of Israel. I will bring it together like sheep in the fold, like a flock in the midst of its pasture: they shall swarm with men. 13. The breaker through shall go up before them: they shall break through and enter by the gate, and go out thereby; and their king shall go on before them, and Yahveh at their head."

according to the following words, is defiled by their crimes in a ruinous degree. Ver. 11. False prophets pursue *the wind*, *i.e.* emptiness, nothingness (Isa. xxvi. 18), instead of being impelled by God's Spirit. שקר כזב, no mere pleonasm. The *lying* expresses the subjective attitude of the prophet to his supposed revelation, the *deceit* the effect which his oracle has on the hearers. How pithless and godless his talk is we see from this, that it is best suited for sportive feasts, where no serious speech, but only hilarious babble, is heard. The apodosis to לוּ begins only with והיה: then would he be a preacher of this people, *i.e.* he would be welcomed as a preacher, in contrast with the one declined in ver. 6. Ver. 12 f. Here such an optimistic prophet of lies speaks, as J. D. Michaelis, Ewald, Hofmann, Kleinert have rightly seen (most recent writers differently). In any other case it would be impossible to preserve the connection. Steiner would put ii. 12 f. after iv. 8. Clearly the ואמו, iii. 1, is adversative. That the language of the false prophet is not formally introduced (by לאמר or the like) cannot seem strange after ver. 5. It is Micah's way to make an opponent speak directly—he is fond of dramatic alternation; cf. ch. vii. The whole of Jacob, and especially the remnant of Israel (what is still left of the northern kingdom), the Lord will gather together. Samaria had meanwhile fallen. The appellative meaning of בצרה (which is really genitive) is secured by the parallel הדרו, in which the art. is strange (Ges. § 110, 2*a*). God unites His people in its own home, like a well-tended flock. The great number is a further point of comparison, as the last words state. הום, Hiphil, to make a noise, used of a great crowd, has for its subject fem. the localities of the land, which correspond to the folds of the pasture. Ver. 13. The *breaker through* is the deliverer, who breaks through the enemies' fortress-walls at

III. 1. But I said: Hear now, ye heads of Jacob and ye rulers of the house of Israel! Does it not pertain to you to understand the right? 2. Ye that hate good and love evil; that strip their skin from them, and their flesh from their bones, 3. and eat the flesh of my people, and flay their skin from them, and break their bones and chop them in pieces as for the pot and as flesh for the caldron. 4. One day they shall cry to Yahveh; but he will not answer them, and will hide his face from them at that time, according to the wickedness of their deeds.

5. Thus says Yahveh respecting the prophets, who lead my people astray, who preach peace when they have something to bite with their teeth, and declare a holy war against him who gives them nothing for their mouth! 6. Therefore night comes to you without vision, and darkness to you without oracle; and the sun goes down upon the prophets, and the day grows black over them. 7. And the seers shall be put

the head of the captive Israelites and leads them home, next leading them forth to conquest. The triumphal march is painted in showy colours.

Chapter III.

Ver. 1. וקציני, see Comm. on Isa. i. 10.—לכם, cf. Hos. v. 1. Ver. 2 f. takes up the figure of the flock, ch. ii. 12, but in order to rebuke the rulers for the way in which they flay the sheep. Ver. 4. *Such* rulers vainly expect the saving acts of the Lord (cf. ii. 7). Ver. 5. The lying prophets, whose pernicious conduct is already described in ii. 11–13, now also receive their sentence. המתעים, cf. Isa. ix. 14 f. *Who bite with their teeth* and cry peace, *i.e.* according to the next contrary clause = if they obtain something to bite, announce peace. קדש מ', see on Joel iv. 9. Ver. 6. Severe distress and perplexity will overtake them, when their arts of divination will utterly fail them. The כֵּן are negative. וחשכה is vocalised as 3 sing. fem. perf.; but the parallelism leads us to expect a substantive. This would at least have had a dagesh in the כ (*chŏschkah*); but better read, with Hartmann, Ryssel: וְחֹשֶׁכָה. Ver. 7. The covering of the lips and beard (Ezek. xxiv. 17), a sign of mourning, here of shame, is specially chosen, because those in question will no

to shame and the soothsayers confounded; and they cover their beard together, for there is no longer any answer of God. 8. I, on the other hand, am filled with power, with Yahveh's Spirit, and with right and courage to tell Jacob his sin and Israel his transgression. 9. Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob and ye rulers of the house of Israel, who abhor the right and pervert all equity,—10. he who builds up Zion with blood and Jerusalem with villany,— 11. Her heads judge for reward, and her priests give instruction for a price, and her prophets divine for silver, and they stay themselves on Yahveh, saying: "Is not Yahveh in our midst? No evil will come upon us." 12. So then for your sake Zion will be ploughed into a field, and Jerusalem become ruin-heaps, and the mountain of the house high places of a wood.

longer venture to speak—their mouth is shut.—מענֵה, stat. constr. of the substantive. Ver. 8. In contrast with these windy, venal orators, the prophet stands forth in holy self-consciousness as one animated by a higher spiritual force. In contrast with their feeble nature he is filled with *strength*, and, more definitely, the potency working in him is indicated: את רוח ה׳. In the same way, in distinction from their lack of character, he is filled with the sense of *right* and consciousness of right, so that he cannot, like them, call evil good and black white; finally, with *manliness*, courage, which does not, as they do, weakly adapt itself to the judgment of the many and great, but stands up boldly for divine right and truth. Thus he cannot do other than bring unpalatable accusations. Ver. 9 ff. again takes up ver. 1, briefly summing up once more what must be laid to the charge of the heads of the nation. Ver. 10. בנה, sing. collect., he who builds. Ver. 11. The *priests* had to teach the Torah, *i.e.* to decide according to the written and otherwise transmitted law in particular questions of theocratic right. This they should do without pay; but they make it a source of gain, whereupon their unpartisan character, as with the judges, is at an end. Ver. 12. The real prophetic verdict comes, an utter contrast to ii. 12 f., predicting absolute destruction.— *Zion*, according to the view ruling at present the *eastern* hill of Jerusalem, on which David's palace and the temple stood; then used synonymously for Jerusalem, as in ver. 10. See Orelli, *Durchs heil. Land*, 3 ed. pp. 78, 84. It is certainly

Exposition.

Contents of chs. ii., iii. Against the False Comfort of Uncalled Prophets: 1. The Misleaders of the People, ch. ii.; (*a*) the true State of things, ii. 1–4; (*b*) the Solaces of empty Prattlers, ii. 5–13: 2. The Word of the Lord about the Fall of Jerusalem, ch. iii.

This second discourse, which we divide in the same way as Kleinert, also falls into two halves, standing this time in antithetical relation to each other. The first half describes the moral corruption, which is aggravated to the utmost by false prophecy, which yet promises good things. In the second, Micah confronts this with his own foreboding oracle. This discourse is considerably later than the first one, as Samaria has fallen in the interval. The sharp rebukes on account of social injustice, the avarice and violent dealing of the great, and the venality of the judges in presence of these things (ii. 1 f., cf. iii. 1 ff., 9 ff.), remind us of the similar rebukes of Micah's contemporary and kindred spirit—Isaiah. As a punishment for their grave offences in regard to landed possessions, they will lose these to the heathen (ii. 4). Hearers of an opposite spirit, however, and, indeed, such as plainly profess to be inspired, hurl back at the prophet the dart: he will be without posterity, and so lose his share in this land of the Lord, which he has wished to hand over to the heathen (ii. 5). They reject his severe preaching altogether (similarly Hos. iv. 4), although there was so much reason for it, and are only too well able to weaken its effects by phrases of pious sound, which take well with the people.

strange that here the temple-hill is distinguished from Zion, Jerusalem coming in between. But by הר הבית only that portion of the ridge is meant which bears the temple.—עִיִּין, Aramaic form of plur. The passage is cited verbally in Jer. xxvi. 18, but with the Hebrew form עִיִּים. A literal fulfilment, certainly in later days; see 1 Macc. iv. 38.

They appeal to God's proved longsuffering and to His almighty aid, which has been so often experienced. He replies that they do not belong to those who have a claim to this, as evil deeds of cruelty and brutal violence occur among them. The last word (ii. 10) is the disinheriting already threatened in ii. 4; but banishment is threatened more plainly than there. This almost dramatically conducted duel grows more excited; a popular orator, characterised in ver. 11, sounding forth his highflying prophetic oracle. This passage shows the degree in which such false prophets imitated the true even in language, but giving encouragement at the wrong time and in the wrong place. In similar terms to Hos. ii. 1 ff., this prophet of good fortune foretells the restoration of Israel, as if the promised "remnant" were to be gathered, delivered by God's power, and crowned with victory at once. Similar promises are found, indeed, in Micah iv. 6 f., v. 3 f., cf. iv. 1 ff., but with the highly important difference that, according to him, Judah-Jerusalem must first fall, so that the judgment, which the other prophets suppose already past, is still impending.

Ch. iii. In striking contrast with these parasites, who speak to please the great, and are fed by them,—before whom the genuine prophet becomes fully conscious of his dignity and the greatness of his calling (iii. 8),—Micah stands by his charges in their full extent, and announces severe divine retribution to the great, who live on the nation's life, and to the prophets who lead it astray. Nay, he now raises his threat to a climax, and proceeds finally to utter the heaviest doom (iii. 12), according to which Jerusalem, with its royal fortress and its temple, will be levelled to the ground.

THE DIVINE JUDGMENT TURNING TO SALVATION, CHS. IV., V.

IV. 1. And it shall come to pass at the end of the days: The mountain of the house of Yahveh shall tower up at the head of the mountains, and be exalted above the hills; and to it shall the peoples flow. 2. And many nations shall go, and say: Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahveh, and to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may instruct us in his ways, and we will walk in his paths. For from Zion shall instruction go forth, and Yahveh's word from Jerusalem. 3. And he will judge between many peoples, and declare right to strong nations afar off. And they shall forge their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks. They shall no more lift up the sword, nation against nation, nor shall they again practise for war. 4. And they shall sit every one under his vine and under his fig-tree undisturbed: for the mouth of Yahveh of hosts has spoken it. 5. For all the peoples walk every one in the name of his god, but we will walk in the name of Yahveh, our God, for ever and ever! 6. On that day, is the oracle of Yahveh, I will gather that which halts, and collect that which is scattered, and which I

CHAPTER IV.

Vv. 1–3 almost literally = Isa. ii. 2–4. For particulars, and the relation of these two passages to each other, see p. 186, and *Comm. on Isaiah*. Ver. 4 is found only in Micah. The conclusion, כי־פי יהוה צבאות נתנו, points to a longer existence of the preceding oracle, ver. 1 ff. The proverbial phrase for idyllic peace, "to sit under his vine and fig-tree," is found in narrative from Solomon's days, 1 Kings iv. 25 (v. 5); cf. 2 Kings xviii. 31; Zech. iii. 10. Ver. 5 has, in Isaiah, the form of a brief summons to the house of Jacob. Here, on the other hand, Israel's lofty prerogative above the nations is joyfully confessed, consisting in this, that it knows the supreme, alone true God, and has the strength and star of its life in His revelation, if it only walks thereby. Ver. 6 recalls the oracle of the false prophet, ch. ii. 12, but receives a different setting from the emphatic temporal definition: "*on that day*," which looks back to באחרית הימים—אספה, Ges. § 68, 2. That which is *halting*, *cast forth*, etc., refers not to a particular animal, but the species

have hurt. 7. And I make that which halts a remnant, and that which is driven away a strong nation; and Yahveh shall be King over them on Mount Zion from henceforth and for ever. 8. But thou, O tower of flocks, height of the daughter of Zion, to thee it shall come; and the former rule shall come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem. 9. Now, why dost thou cry out so loud? Is there, then, no king in thee, or has thy counsellor vanished? For pangs have seized thee like a woman in travail. 10. Be in pain and break forth, daughter of Zion, like a woman in travail! For now thou must go forth from the stronghold and dwell in the open field, and come even to Babylon—there thou shalt be set free; there shall Yahveh release thee from the hand of thy

(collectively). Ver. 7. From הָלְאָה (Amos v. 27) a Niphal is formed, in whose partic. the נדחה recurs in stronger form.—*Yahveh king*, cf. Obad. 21; Joel iv. 21. מעתה begins, not from the actual present, but from the moment of final deliverance. Ver. 8. The figure of the flock calls up the mention of the *tower of flocks*, to which the apostrophe *hill of the d. of Zion* is added in apposition, as a building perhaps belonging to the royal palace in Jerusalem (differently Gen. xxxv. 21) is meant, which bore this name, and is addressed as representing the Davidic royal family. עפל also is not purely appellative; it is the name of a fortified height on Zion, probably on the south side of the eastern elevation (Zion). Thus the former rule will return to the palace. Misled by the athnach, some have taken בת ציון as subject of the first clause (so still Kleinert; whereas Luther translates, "thy golden rose (עֲדִיד) will come to thee." The subject to תאתה rather follows first in the second clause. Ryssel doubts the originality of the תאתה, which is superfluous before ובאה. But strong emphasis rests on the idea, and the language is circumstantially solemn.—As ממלכת is stat. contr., we must not translate, "the kingdom to the daughter of Jerusalem" (so *O. T. Prophecy*, p. 306, after Zech. ix. 9), nor "royal authority *over* the d. of J." (Hitz., after Num. xxii. 4), but, the royal power belonging to the d. of J. Ver. 9. Now the city sighs and mourns as if it had no king. עתה denotes the nearer future, in contrast with the definitions, vv. 1, 6. Ver. 10. She rightly bears herself like one attacked by birth-pangs; for a grievous, painful time of woes comes upon her before the happy birth takes place. נחי (from נוּחַ), to break forth, of a

foes. 11. And now shall many nations be gathered together against thee, who cry, "Let her be dishonoured, and let our eyes feast on Zion!" 12. But they have not understood the thoughts of Yahveh, nor observed his counsel, that he heaps them together like sheaves for the threshing-floor. 13. Arise and thresh, daughter of Zion! For I will make thy horn iron, and will make thy hoofs brass; and thou shalt crush many nations, and shalt devote their booty to Yahveh, and

travailing woman; to bear fruit with pangs, *i.e.* here the new better state of things, the future Jerusalem.—עתה, as in ver. 9. —*Thou shalt come to Babylon;* cf. as to form, i. 15. *And thou shalt come even to Babylon.* These words, like a lightning flash, cast a strong light on what is announced in iii. 12. That there is no mention of the capital of the Assyrians, who yet here form everywhere the threatening foreground (see again, ch. v. 4 f.), but of Babylon, which only attained independent importance afterwards, and which was then quite subjugated by the Assyrians, has led several moderns to erase the words ובאת עד־בבל, or even the whole section, as a later interpolation appended *ex eventu*. A better, but not sufficient, explanation is to say that even the Assyrians might banish the conquered Jews to Babylon (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11), just as well as, conversely, Sargon (perhaps just then) transplanted many Babylonians to Syria and Samaria (Schrader, i. 268, ii. 95). A middle course is to suppose that the religious, typical meaning of Babylon (Gen. xi.), which is similar to that of Nimrod (ch. v. 5), might help to suggest it as a place of captivity for secularised Zion. See the discussion of the different views in Ryssel, p. 224 ff. But the decisive reason for the unexpected mention of Babylon in this place, which agrees remarkably with history, lies in that living connection of the prophetic revelation with external events of which the local conception of the promise in ch. v. 1 is also an example. Ver. 11. ועתה applies to the time after the deliverance from Babylon, promised in ver. 10. Ver. 12. This assembling of the hostile nations against Jerusalem is suggested to them by the Lord Himself, who will direct it. Ver. 13. The judgment is here pictured as a threshing. This may proceed without trouble when the sheaves are gathered to the threshing-floor. The population of Zion, the instrument of judgment, is represented as a threshing bullock, hence the mention of horns and hoofs. והרכיתי, 2 sing. fem., with archaic termination, taken

their substance to the ruler of the whole earth. 14. Now shalt thou be straitened, daughter of crowds: he raises a rampart against us; with the rod they smite the judge of Israel on the cheek.

V. 1. But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, small to be numbered among the hamlets of Judah, from thee shall he come

by Massoretes for 1 sing. (Ges. § 44, Anm. 1). Ver. 14. With עתה the prophet returns to the next stage of the development already described in ver. 9 f. Here, too, Zion is addressed, this time by a bodeful name, which is intended to suggest the pressure common in a beleaguered city.—The greatest insult is done to the chief of the nation, who is here, of intention, not called king, that this lofty name may not be dishonoured.

Chapter V.

Ver. 1. ואתה corresponds to the same word in iv. 8, advancing on a similar line to the promise. *Bethlehem*, the Judæan house of David, bore from early times also the name אפרת, "fertility," fruit-field, which agrees well with the usual name (Bethlehem = house of bread), and the fertile position of the town in barren surroundings (Orelli, *Durchs heil. Land*, 3 ed. p. 131). The form אפרתה with ה also in Gen. xlviii. 7, cf. xxxv. 19; but there it is the ה— of direction; here, on the other hand, as in Ruth iv. 11, a fuller sounding, more solemn form. The epithet distinguishes this Bethl.-Judah from one belonging to the tribe of Zebulon (Josh. xix. 15). צעיר, masc., referring to בית, usually taken as predicate (so LXX early); but then we should expect צעיר אתה, and a copula before ממך. In our translation, Hitzig objects the absence of the article, and therefore takes over ה from אפרתה; but in such a qualifying apposition the article is not absolutely necessary, and would not well agree with להיות. The fact that מהיות is not used, shows that Bethlehem is not altogether denied the rank of a country town. It was really the seat of a אַלּוּף, the centre of a אֶלֶף. It is only called little in regard to this, its modest rank; and how small it is for the dignity of being the home of the great King! Cf. the deviation in form, Matt. ii. 6.—לי marks the coming one as a mighty instrument in carrying out God's purposes. No subject is named; in a mysterious way only the destiny and dignity of the Bethlehemite are announced, and, in addition, that He has been going forth and coming from time immeasur-

forth to me who shall be ruler in Israel; and his goings forth are from the foretime, from days immemorial. 2. Therefore will he give them up until the time when she that is in travail has brought forth; then shall the remnant of his brethren return to the sons of Israel. 3. And he stands and feeds in the might of Yahveh, in the majesty of the name of Yahveh his God; and they shall sit still: for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. 4. And this (man) shall be

able.—The words can neither merely signify that His pedigree can be traced back into the grey foretime, which was true of every descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; nor yet is the pre-temporal and pre-mundane existence of the Messiah taught here with dogmatic definiteness, the Hebrew conceptions of קדם, עולם being too little metaphysical for this. Cf. in ch. vii. 20, קדם, with reference to the patriarchal promises, and Amos ix. 11. עולם in a still more limited sense. The prophet has in view the earliest preparations which God made in prophecy and history for the founding of the Messianic kingdom. Hofmann, "From time inconceivable the ruler has been going forth and coming, who will finally proceed from Bethlehem; for, as it is He to whom the history of mankind, of Israel, of the Davidic house tends, all advances in the same are beginnings of His coming, goings forth of the second son of Jesse." Elsewhere, also, the prophet shows this eye for the history of redemption, regarding the future as the consummation of all that has transpired since the grey foretime; see vii. 20, cf. iv. 10, v. 5. Ver. 2. Therefore, because such great and blessed events are coming, the surrender of Israel to affliction can only be temporary, lasting till the point of time when, after painful pangs, the glorious birth takes place. He who is born for the salvation of the nation is, according to the context, no other than the ruler from Bethlehem. The יולדה is not the personal mother of the Messiah (Hengst., Hitz., Ewald, Keil), but the *Zion* lying in pangs in iv. 9 f., i.e. *the Church*, whose children are the several sons of Israel, who on this account are called *brethren* of the Messiah (אחיו). So Calvin, Kleinert, *et al.* Cf. Hos. xiii. 13 and Comm. on Isa. vii. 14. Ver. 3. וישבו, properly to sit still, so be at peace, dwell quietly. עתה, now will be fulfilled what was long ago predicted of the universal rule and greatness of the Messiah, Ps. ii. 8, lxxii. 8. Ver. 4. *And he shall be peace* (not, with Luther, to be joined to what follows), comprehends in one pregnant and

peace. When Asshur shall come into our land and tread our palaces, we shall bring up seven shepherds against him, yea eight princes of men. 5. And they shall eat up the land of Asshur with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in its gates. And he shall deliver (us) from Asshur when he shall come into our land and tread our border. 6. And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many peoples, like the dew from Yahveh, like showers upon the grass, which tarries for no one, and waits not for the children of men. 7. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the beasts of the wood, like a lion among flocks of sheep, who, when he goes through, tramples and tears in pieces, with none to deliver. 8. Let thy hand be high above all thy oppressors, and all thy enemies shall be rooted out! 9. And it shall come to pass on that day, is Yahveh's oracle, that I will root out thy steeds from thy midst, and cause thy war-chariots to vanish. 10. And I root out the cities of thy land, and pull

blissful word what the Messiah's coming signifies for His people and the world generally; cf. Eph. ii. 14.—*Asshur*, the foe who was the terror of the prophet's day, is here made an example to show that Israel, under its divine ruler, will be quit of all hostile power of the world. Israel will meet him with seven, nay eight princes,—a proverbial overpowering number, as in Amos i. 3, etc.,—who will devour his land with the sword. *The land of* the defiant *Nimrod* is properly Babylonia (Gen. x. 10 f.), which, however, the prophet combines with Assyria, because forming one empire with it. The Titanic Nimrod stamps the physiognomy of the self-glorifying empire of the world. Ver. 6. Of the heavenly *dew*, the first feature is its spontaneous appearance; it is dependent on no one, whereas, conversely, every one longs anxiously for it; but no less its higher origin, its immense extent, and beneficent, fertilising effect. Ver. 7 f. On the other hand, the resistless power of God's people is described, to which all mere earthly power helplessly succumbs. Ver. 9 shows sufficiently, like Zech. ix. 10, that in the preceding context spiritual power is meant, not rude force of weapons. The purpose of the destruction of the horses and chariots, like the overthrow of the strongholds (ver. 10), is to deprive Israel of all support of fleshly confidence, cf. Isa.

down all thy fortresses. 11. And I root out the magical arts from thy hand, and thou shalt have no more diviners. 12. And I root out thy graven images and thy carved images from thy midst, and thou shalt no more fall down before the work of thy hands. 13. And I will pluck thy Asherim from thy midst, and thy cities will I destroy. 14. And in wrath and fury I will execute vengeance on the heathen, who would not hearken.

Exposition.

Contents of chs. iv., v. The Divine Judgment turning into Salvation. 1. Zion Exalted, iv. 1–7; 2. The Royal City destined to Glory, iv. 8–14; 3. The Prince of Peace, v. 1–5; 4. His People, v. 6–14.

IV. 1–7. With the glimpse given in ch. iii. 12, the threat of judgment has reached its climax and exhausted itself. Can the fate described there be the end of God's dealings with His city? This is impossible. The prophet follows up the gloomy utterance (iii. 12) with the divine oracle (iv. 1 ff.) already long known, which we read in Isa. ii. also, thus placing alongside the deepest humiliation of Zion its final

ii. 7, 15. Ver. 11 ff. Superstitious customs must utterly away. —כישפים, here not mere magical formulas, which must be taken away from the mouth, not the hand, but manipulations, such as were done with rods, rings, etc., in order to obtain portents. מעוננים, in Isa. ii. 6. Ver. 13. The second mention of the cities, alongside the אישריך, *i.e.* the tree-shaped symbols of the goddess Astarte, is strange. In ver. 4 also, cf. with ver. 5 at close, we have certainly intentional repetition. Targ., Rashi, Kimchi: "thy foes," therefore צר=ער, if not, צָרֶיךָ is to be read. J. D. Michaelis, ערעריך (cf. Comm. on Jer. xvii. 6), which is said to denote tamarisks (?) as idolatrous symbols. Better still with Steiner after 2 Chron. xxiv. 18, עֲצֵבֶיךָ. Ver. 14. *On the heathen, who heard not*, obeyed not God's voice, when He revealed Himself also to them through the Messianic salvation. This assumes that a portion of the heathen world, overpowered by that revelation, will do homage to the Messianic kingdom and to Yahveh Himself.

exaltation above all mountains, alongside the destruction of the "house of Yahveh" its world-ruling central position in the future. (See the exposition of this oracle in *Comm. on Isaiah*, p. 33). Then only, when this eternal kingdom of God begins on Zion, will the remnant of the nation be gathered together by the Lord, the good Shepherd.

In iv. 8–14 the gaze rests upon the royal city with its fluctuating fortunes. Evil times lie before it; but the sufferings awaiting it are birth-pangs, from which a glorious future is to issue. These sufferings consist in investment and confinement by powerful foes, in contemptuous ill-treatment of the king, and deportation of the inhabitants to Babylon (vv. 9 f., 14). In this way the city of God will sink into the dust before the godless city of the world. But this deepest humiliation becomes the turning-point of redemption and exaltation. True, after it has been rebuilt, the city of the Lord will be again attacked by heathen nations filled with rage against it and its God (a peculiar contrast to ver. 2 ff.), as the prophecy of Joel (Joel iv. 1 ff.) must yet be fulfilled; but this last decisive conflict, in distinction from the one now impending, will end with a glorious subjugation of the foes by invincible Zion (vv. 11–13).

In v. 1 ff. the divine-human Prince of Peace of that blessed future comes into the foreground. He will come forth, from little Bethlehem, like David formerly, when the greatness of the royal house has been humbled to the low position of that shepherd-house. Cf. the analogous predictions, Isa. vii. 15 f., xi. 1. The high divine destiny, which has been assigned since the beginning of human memory to the scion for whose coming all races wait, stands in wondrous contrast with that lowly origin. But even after He has risen, like David, from lowliness to greatness and become a ruler adorned with majesty and glory, He will remain a true shepherd who, gentle as He is glorious, will feed, *i.e.* tend and shield His people under a peaceful sceptre. He will be *peace*, *i.e.* His

rule will produce only peace; cf. Isa. ix. 5 f., xi. 1 ff. with ver. 6 ff. Then the boldest hopes ever set on the Davidic kingdom will be fulfilled, that kingdom being acknowledged through the whole earth, so that its subjects have rest without as well as within. Even an imperial power like Assyria must then abstain from hostile acts or learn Israel's superior might. Ver. 6 ff. The victorious superiority of this government over all earthly authority will communicate itself even to the people of this King, after it has become thoroughly God's people and laid aside all worldly, carnal ways and heathen customs. That the people will then be gathered out of the dispersion, was said already in ch. v. 2, which passage shows that the good promised in iv. 6 f. is connected with the coming of the Messiah, if it is not His work.

The fulfilment of the threatenings in this discourse was at first delayed by the repentance of Hezekiah and his contemporaries, Jer. xxvi. 18 f. In consequence of this improvement Jerusalem was even permitted soon to enjoy a foretaste of the promise of Micah iv. 11 ff. in the destruction of Sennacherib's army (Isa. xxxvii.). But what Micah saw (iii. 12, iv. 10) was the completion of a process which must be completed sooner or later. Only out of the complete dissolution of the Jewish State could a new and better condition be developed. The overthrow of Jerusalem and the exile actually came, and, indeed, the banishment to Babylon (see on iv. 10), all which came similarly into Micah's circle of vision and almost contemporaneously into Isaiah's (xxxix. 6), only that in the former the political relation of Babylon to the Assyrians remains obscure, the latter people constantly ruling his horizon. Moreover, the deliverance from Babylon took place; and in addition the Prince of Peace appeared out of Bethlehem, although the founding of the Messianic kingdom of God did not follow immediately on the redemption from exile, as it might seem to do according to Micah. On the

relation of Micah v. 1 to the N. T. fulfilment, see Orelli, *A. T. Prophecy*, p. 308.

Change from a Reprobate State to a State of Grace, Chs. vi., vii.

VI. 1. Hear ye now what Yahveh says: Arise, make complaint toward the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice! 2. Hear, ye mountains, the accusation of Yahveh, and ye unchangeable ones, ye foundations of the earth! For Yahveh has a contention with his people, and he will call Israel to account. 3. My people, what have I done to thee, and how have I troubled thee? Testify against me! 4. I brought thee out of the land of Egypt, and released thee out of the house of bondage; and sent before thee Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. 5. My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal, that thou mayest

Chapter VI.

Ver. 1. The prophet is summoned to stand forth as God's advocate. The *mountains*, according to ver. 2, are invited as witnesses (cf. ch. i. 2); hence it is wrong to translate "contend *with* the mountains," unless אֶל ההרים is to be read for אֵת ההרים (LXX). When the prophet raises his voice against the people, the echo sounds back from the mountains, and it is as if he contended with them. Ver. 2. האתנים are here not the brooks, which are usually so called, but, as the more closely defining epithet shows, the foundations of the earth.—יכח, Hithp., like Niph., Isa. i. 18. Ver. 3. God first of all calls on His people to accuse Him if it has anything to bring forward. לאה, Hiphil, cf. Isa. vii. 13. Ver. 4. On the contrary, God has done the most wonderful acts of deliverance for them. העלתיך word-play with the opposite הלאתיך. Moses the prophet and lawgiver, Aaron the high priest, Miriam the leader of the triumphal dance at the Red Sea (Ex. xv. 20), need only be mentioned to revive the memory of those merciful dealings. Ver. 5. But even the hostile prophet is forced to bless Israel, so that the base plot of Balak was rendered harmless, nay useful to Israel, by Yahveh's influence; see Num. xxii.–xxiv. Balaam's oracles

know the righteous acts of Yahveh!—6. Wherewith shall I meet Yahveh, draw near in submission to God on high? Shall I meet him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? 7. Will Yahveh take pleasure in thousands of rams, in myriads of streams of oil? Shall I give up my first-born for my sin, the fruit of my body for the offence of my soul?

are the answer to Balak's plot.—The local definition "from Shittim to Gilgal" is not to be removed from the text (Ewald). It is meant to embrace the further march to Canaan, *Shittim* being the first camping-place of the people after meeting with Balaam (Num. xxv. 1), *Gilgal* the first station in Canaan. The local definition depends as a further object on זכר. That something has fallen out (so Steiner, who according to Josh. ii. 1, iii. 1, has in view specifically the passage over the Jordan) is not impossible, but by no means certain. The צדקות of Yahveh are the facts which the people are to realise to themselves: His manifestations of righteousness, in which, however, as in Judg. v. 11, צדקה refers to God's loving fidelity to His people, cf. Comm. on Isa. xli. 2. Ver. 6 f. The prophet puts himself in the place of the nation, which, instead of being able to reply, ought deeply to feel its guilt, and ask itself: How can I atone for such guilt and appease the Lord?—במה, with what kind of gifts? as in 1 Sam. vi. 2.—כפף, Niph., properly to bend oneself. The most natural course is to think of sacrificial animals, by which the law permits expiation to be made, at least in certain cases. Should I attempt it with *burnt-offerings*, with *year-old calves?* The meaning, of course, is that these animals are to be offered as burnt-offerings.—*Year-old* are named, because according to Lev. ix. 3 this was the normal age of sacrificial animals; such therefore would be most acceptable to the Lord. Ver. 7. As, however, sin assumes a thousand forms, far exceeding the limit of expiation by legal methods, the question arises, whether Yahveh's favour can be gained by greatly multiplied sacrifices, by thousands of rams or myriads of streams of *oil*. The latter was added as an accompanying libation to certain sacrifices, Lev. ii. 1, 15, vii. 12; Ezek. xlv. 24, etc. The climax grows in boldness: Shall I give my first-born for my sin, properly, as my sin, but in the sense of expiation for sin, חטאת having both significations. An example of such desperate efforts to win the favour of the Deity, or to avert His wrath, was furnished by heathen neighbours, such as the Moabites just named (2 Kings iii. 27), and especially the Phœnicians. Ver. 8. Now

8. He has told thee, O man, what is good, and what Yahveh requires of thee: rather to practise right, and strive after love, and walk obediently with thy God.

9. Yahveh's voice cries to the city, and it is well to fear* thy name: Hear ye the rod, and who has appointed it!
10. Are there still always treasures of injustice in the house of the ungodly, and the scanty ephah which is accursed?
11. Shall I justify* with unjust scales, and with the bag full

the prophet delays no longer in declaring what is the conduct well-pleasing to God. The address אדם intimates the universal validity of this rule, made known in some form to all men; still the saying has Israel especially in view, as the mention of Yahveh shows. כי אם as after a negation, because, in fact, God requires, not the attempts at expiation enumerated before, but the conduct indicated in what follows (cf. as to form Deut. x. 12): conscientious observance of justice, "love of human kindness," *i.e.* diligent practice of it (cf. אהב, Amos iv. 5, v. 15, and elsewhere), and *walking humbly* (the Hiphil in adverbial sense, cf. Job v. 7, יגביהו עוף), in relation to God.—This precept recalls, although it is nowhere put so precisely, former prophetic oracles like Amos v. 14 f., Hos. vi. 6, and also 1 Sam. xv. 22. Generally speaking, it is an epitome of the moral law, given to the nation from the days of Moses, cf. the Decalogue. Ver. 9. Second opening of accusation.—לעיר, Jerusalem is the headquarters of the sinful practices, ch. i. 5.—יראה, erroneously pointed as if it came from רָאָה: "and thy name looks out for wisdom" (so still Kleinert, Keil; cf. Jer. v. 3). But this suits neither the subject, nor verb, nor context. The versions rightly derive it from יָרֵא, and some Hebrew MSS. have יִרְאֵי. Better Ewald, Hitz. יִרְאָה, as infin. joined with accus.—תושיה signifies either: safety, help, or: wisdom, "which has the guarantee of its good success and issue in itself" (Kleinert). When Yahveh's voice sounds so threatening and His rod is already buzzing near, it is prudent to fear His name, and to hear what is said in His name. Ver. 10. אִשׁ for יֵשׁ, as in 2 Sam. xiv. 19. Are they *still always* there, provoking God's wrath?—*Ephah of leanness*, consumption; cf. the same trade-sin Amos viii. 5; and respecting the ephah as a corn-measure, Comm. on Isa. v. 10.—זעום, both *exsecratus* and *exsecrabilis*. Ver. 11. האזכה, rightly taken by Vulg. in declarative sense: *Shall I declare just* (therefore Piel or Hiphil), so that God is the speaker. Elsewhere, indeed, Piel of זכה occurs only in another sense. Else the first person

of false stones? 12. For her rich men are full of violence, and her inhabitants utter deceit, and her tongue is falsehood in her mouth. 13. So then I will also smite thee heavily, with desolation for thy misdeeds. 14. Thou shalt eat and not be satisfied, so that thy belly remains hungry; and shalt remove without carrying anything away; and he who gets away, him will I devote to the sword. 15. Thou shalt sow, and not reap; thou shalt tread olives, but not anoint thee with oil, and grape-juice, but not drink wine. 16. They acted according to Omri's statutes, and according to all the practices of the house of Ahab, and you walk in their counsels; that I may make thee a terrible desolation, and her inhabitants a hissing; and you shall bear the reproach of my people.

would have to be so taken that the speaker makes himself an example. Others put the third person.—They carried stones of deceit in the *bag*. Ver. 12. The fem. suff. refers to the city.—*Her tongue is deceit*, i.e. does nothing but deceive. Ver. 13. The corresponding recompense on God's part consists in this, that He smites the land so that it is in evil case, and, indeed, by ravaging foes, which, of course, is still future. השמם (uncontracted, Ges. § 67, Anm. 10): *devastando*. Ver. 14. ישח, here only: emptiness. As to the matter, cf. Hag. i. 6.—תסג from סוג, to remove, therefore here: to carry off. Ver. 15. Cf. Deut. xxviii. 39 f., סוך, not of anointing in conferring office (משׁח), but of the ordinary use of oil for personal convenience and comfort. Ver. 16. שׁמר, Hithp., anxiously to regulate oneself by something. Instead of showing such reverence to the divine law, they follow with perverse faithfulness human examples, and those the worst, which they imitate as if they were sacred ordinances, such as the policy of *Omri* and the conduct of the *house of Ahab*. The dynasty of Omri (1 Kings xvi. 25), whose godless spirit is seen in aggravated form in Ahab, gave in the northern kingdom the most pronounced example of a government hateful to God. Ahab sacrificed the property and life of the poor to his fancies, at the same time encouraging idolatry and persecuting God's prophets.—*Make thee* (the land) *a terrible desolation*. The two meanings of שׁמה, desolation and horror, intermingle, as often in Jeremiah and Ezekiel; hence joined with שׁרקה, as in Jer. li. 37.—*The reproach of my people you shall bear*, addressed to the respectable, rich (ver. 12).

VII. 1. Woe is me! for I am as after the fruit-gathering, as in the gleaning of the vintage: there is no cluster to eat; my soul longs for an early fig. 2. The good man is vanished from the land; and there is none honest among men: they all lurk together for blood; they lie in wait every one for the other with a net. 3. Their hands go out to evil, to do it earnestly. The prince asks, and the judge is venal. The great man only utters what his soul longs after: then they turn it aright. 4. The best among them is like a thorn-bush, the most honest worse than a hedge. On the day of thy scouts, then comes thy visitation; now will their perplexity begin. 5. Trust ye not a companion, and confide not in a friend; from her that lies in thy bosom keep the doors of thy

Chapter VII.

Ver. 1 ff. Lyrical outburst of the prophet, who speaks here again in the name of the Church, not, indeed, the empirical, but the ideal Church, which has to lament over the empirical one. Ver. 1. There is nothing left to take pleasure in. One feels the same before as after the fruitage and vintage, when gardens and vineyards wear a comfortless look.—As in the state *of fruit-gathering* = in the time when the fruit has been gathered. —No *early fig*, for which one looks with special desire! Cf. Hos. ix. 10. Ver. 2 serves as explanation. Piety and honesty have vanished. All lurk maliciously one for another. Ver. 3. Properly, "the hands are at evil to do it well," *i.e.* ready to practise it earnestly. *The prince demands*, namely, what he will, *and the judge for reward*, namely, is at its service.—ויעבתוה, they wring it out, turn and twist so long until it (what the great man wishes) comes to pass. A speaking example of what is meant is the history of Naboth, when there was no lack of venal judges (1 Kings xxi. 11). Ver. 4. ממסוכה for ממשוכה, worse than a hedge with thorns. כמן, in comparative sense stands thus with substantives, when these have a latent quality, as the hedge the quality of prickiness, gold that of value (Ps. lxxii. 15).—*On the day of thy scouts* or seers. The genuine prophets are meant, who announce a fatal day of doom: *now shall their perplexity*, bewilderment (Isa. xxii. 5), begin. The suff. applies to the inhabitants. Others less suitably take תהיה as 2 perf. Ver. 5. The briars and hedges are deceptive. Therefore the warning follows, no one is to trust even his neighbours; even in them fidelity is no longer to be

mouth. 6. For the son makes a mock of the father, the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; the foes of a man are his house-mates. 7. But I will look out for Yahveh, will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me. 8. Rejoice not, my foe, on my account! For when I am fallen, I rise again; when I sit in darkness, Yahveh is my light. 9. I will bear the indignation of Yahveh, for I have sinned against him—until he plead my cause and maintain my right; he will bring me out to the light, I shall behold his righteousness. 10. And my foe shall see it, and shame shall cover her who says to me, Where is Yahveh thy God? Mine eyes shall see their desire upon her; now she shall be for trampling like street-mire.—11. It is a day to build thy walls, on that day the boundary shall be removed far off. 12. A day it is when

looked for. Ver. 6. Cf. the picture of moral depravity in Rom. i. 29 ff. The hostility of friends in Matt. x. 35 f. is on different grounds. Ver. 7. Here too (differently in iii. 8) the prophet speaks in the name of the pure Zion, the ideal Church, which is amazed at the corruption of its children, and sets its hope on the Lord *its God*. Ver. 8. The *foe* of Zion is the heathen world-power, at whose feet she will lie. It is left indefinite, and therefore not to be identified offhand with בַּת אַשּׁוּר; as a city stands in best contrast with Zion, Babylon may be supplied in thought; see iv. 10. Ver. 9. צְדָקָה, see on vi. 5. Ver. 11. חֹק, properly *statutum*, *definitum*, hence what is limited, limit; cf. Job xxvi. 10; Prov. viii. 29.—Ver. 11*b* and 12 contain a corrective to ver. 11*a*. To say that the walls of God's city are to be built, does not mean that the Church will have narrow limits. The ideal meaning of the city here shines clearly out as in Zech. ii. 5 ff. Ver. 12. Then the city will be the goal to which pilgrims will come from all sides, so that Zion is the centre of a great empire. The first two local definitions refer to exiles (cf. Isa. xxvii. 12 f.), in any case also to heathen united with them.—The *river* is the Euphrates.—On the other hand, *to sea from sea and from mountain* (הַר, dependent on the near מִן, Hitz.) *to mountain*, fixes the broad limits of the future Holy Land: from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean, and from Mount Lebanon in the north to the Edomite range in the south. Probably the author was thinking more definitely of the two mountain names, *Hor* in the

they shall come to thee from Asshur unto the cities of Egypt, and from Egypt unto the river, and to sea from sea, and from mountain to mountain. 13. But the land shall be a desolation because of its inhabitants by reason of their deeds.

14. Feed thy people with thy staff, the flock of thine inheritance, which dwells by itself alone, in the forest in the midst of Carmel; let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in olden days. 15. As in the days when thou wentest forth out of the land of Egypt I will show it wonders. 16. The heathen shall see and despair of all their might; they shall lay their hand on their mouth, their ears shall be deaf. 17. They shall lick dust like the serpent; like the creeping things of the earth they shall tremble out of their close places. They shall come trembling to Yahveh our God, and be afraid because of thee. 18. Who is a God like thee, who forgives sin and passes by the sin of the remnant of his inheritance? He keeps not His anger for ever, for he takes pleasure in mercy. 19. He will have compassion on us again, will

south (Num. xx. 22), and in the north (Num. xxxiv. 7 f.) of the land. Ver. 13 again casts a shadow on the scene: the land will then lie waste, namely, at the outset of the happy period. Ver. 14. שכני לבדד, to be referred, after Num. xxiii., to Israel, which will dwell apart from the heathen. To this first definition is added the second one, which characterises the well-guarded position of the rich pasture, where the Lord's flock feeds. Hitzig thinks that no careful writer would drive even figurative sheep into a wood; but the woodlands of Carmel enclosed glorious, flowery pasture-lands. By the side of *Carmel*, as representing the west-Jordan land, stand the east-Jordan districts of Bashan and Gilead, which also furnish specially fine pastures. Ver. 15. On the prayer of ver. 14 the divine answer here follows. Ewald would have the imperative הַרְאֵנִי; but the people, not God, went out of Egypt. Ver. 16. Their ears shall be *made deaf*, namely, by the thunder-peal of His revelations. Ver. 17. In deepest submissiveness the heathen shall draw nigh to the God of Israel, giving up all resistance, trembling and yet longing for salvation; cf. Ps. ii. 11, and especially Hos. xi. 10 f. The conclusion still further recalls Hosea. The ground-passage, however, is Ps. xviii. 45, the subjection of the foreigners to David. Ver. 19. The *trampling* down of misdeeds takes place through the sovereign power of

trample under foot our iniquities, and cast all their misdeeds into the depth of the sea. 20. Thou wilt show faithfulness to Jacob, mercy to Abraham, which thou didst swear to our fathers from the days of the foretime.

Exposition.

Contents of chs. vi., vii. Change from a Reprobate State to a State of Grace. 1. Statement on God's part: *a.* God's unrequited Love, vi. 1–5; *b.* The Right Way to please Him, vi. 6–8; *c.* What displeases Him in present conditions, vi. 9–16; 2. Statement on the Church's part: *a.* Self-accusation, vii. 1–6; *b.* Self-comfort, vii. 7–13; *c.* Confident Prayer, vii. 14–20.

Chs. vi., vii. give in a sense the inner side of chs. iii.–v., the ethical passage from the state of guilt to that of favour, the *via salutis*, which the community that needs pardon has to take, being expounded; and indeed this way of grace is set forth, first on God's part, then in the words of the community. Ch. vi. begins with accusation on God's part, His rich love having found no response; it closes with an accusing description of the immoral state in which the nation is found. But in the interval comes a passage (vv. 6–8), in which the community is told what it has to do in order to secure God's approval. Therein all self-willed worship and sacrificial service are set aside, and the observance of the fundamental moral laws is insisted on. But just as little from this passage (ch. vi. 6–8) as from Hos. vi. 6 or Isa. i. 11 f. can the inference be drawn, that no "Mosaic" law of sacrifice, like the priestly codex, existed in the time of the prophet. For the ordained expiations of the priestly codex were

grace. The sinking of sin *in the sea* exhibits it, in a fine figure, as done away for ever. Ver. 20. By *Jacob* here, where *Abraham* follows, the patriarch is meant. God shows him faithfulness by verifying in his posterity the promises He gave him.

designed and efficacious only for offences committed unintentionally. Here, on the other hand, far worse offences are in question. Penetrated by this feeling, Israel asks whether it should multiply sacrificial gifts without limit, which, however, the Lord deprecates, as He does not seek such gifts for their own sake, the principal thing in His sight being the spirit which must show itself in walking before God and in conduct to men. The emphasis here, of course, is on the spiritualising of God's service, as in 1 Sam. xv. 22, Hos. vi. 6, Isa. 1. 11 f., Jer. vii. 22 f., and elsewhere. What ver. 8 speaks of is certainly no proper expiation; but it is an indispensable condition for pleasing God and for sharing in any expiation of sin provided by Him. Ver. 7*b* casts peculiar light on the origin of human sacrifice among the heathen: the practice is psychologically intelligible as a last refuge of the contrite heart, which would fain appease the Godhead at any price. On the other hand, it is a wrong inference from this passage that in Israel itself human sacrifice was practised without scruple in Yahveh's worship at any period after Moses, and was universally regarded as legitimate. On the contrary, it was always regarded by more enlightened Israelites as an abomination, as at least a daring exaggeration and perversion of the Mosaic law (Ezek. xx. 25 f.); whereas certainly those who quarrelled with the pure Yahveh-worship easily fell into this error; so recently King Ahaz, 2 Kings xvi. 3, and soon again Manasseh, 2 Kings xxi. 6.

In vii. 1 f. the community appears, taking the path pointed out to it. It declares without reserve how thoroughly justified God's accusations are by the universal corruption of its members, and the relaxing and dishonouring of the tenderest relations; how well merited the hard fate under which it lies, and in which it must needs see its just punishment. Nevertheless it cherishes immoveable confidence in God, who is now angry with it for a while, but whose covenant-fidelity will gloriously appear, when He shall one

day succour those crushed by an arrogant foe and re-establish them, that His kingdom may flourish in wider extent than ever, and be peopled with all the exiles and fugitives in Assyria and Egypt. In ver. 14 ff. a prayer forms a fitting conclusion of this section and of the whole book. The prayer is to be viewed as put into the mouth of the community. It calls on the Lord for the fulfilment of what is foretold in iv. 6 f. and elsewhere. By gathering His scattered flock as the good Shepherd, thus proving that He has forgiven His people the great sin which plunged it into ruin, He will win the hearts of the nations, so that, giving up their resistance to a God so mighty and withal so gracious, they will do Him unstinted homage, cf. iv. 1 ff. In this way the Lord will fulfil His gracious promises to Abraham and Jacob.

NAHUM.

An oracle, in three parts, against Nineveh has been handed down under the name of *Nahum* (נַחוּם, properly comfort) *the Elkoshite*, a prophet about whom nothing further is told us in any other quarter. The epithet הָאֶלְקֹשִׁי, i. 1, is not to be taken as a patronymic (so Targ. early), but refers to a country town, Elkosh, which is certainly sought in different places. Jerome (*Prol. ad Nah.*) derives it from a village, Elcese, which was shown him in Galilee, but says nothing more definite about the situation. Some conjecture it to be the El-Kauze of to-day (El Kozah on the map of the Eng. Explor. Fund, 1880), directly west of Kedesh, a little to the east of Ramiah) (= Ramah in Naphthali). Another, also ancient, tradition transfers it, on the other hand, into the tribe of Simeon, with the addition "beyond Jordan" (Pseudepiphanius, *et al.*), which addition, however, seems to have arisen from error, so that this opinion also has its rights, as Nestle has shown (*Zeitschr. d. deutsch. Paläst.-vereins*, i. 222 ff.). On the other hand, we must reject the favourite opinion, since J. D. Michaelis and Eichhorn, to the effect that Elkosh, in Assyria, not far from Mosul and ancient Nineveh, is meant (cf. still Kleinert in *Handwörterb.* under "Nahum"), where the prophet's grave is shown. This site comes into notice first in the sixteenth century. Further, the conjecture of Knobel and Hitzig should be mentioned, that the later Capernaum (in this case = כְּפַר נחוּם) has its name from the prophet, in which case its earlier name would be Elkosh.

The colouring of the language is peculiar, and may perhaps

be traceable to a Galilæan origin. Yet it is strange that Nahum takes no notice of his countrymen being led captive by the Assyrians (he scarcely does this even in ch. ii. 3). As to the time when Nahum uttered his prophecy, the oracle itself shows that the invasion of the Assyrians under Sennacherib, so dangerous to Jerusalem, belonged already to the past (ch. i. 11 f., ii. 1); but that, on the other hand, Nineveh was still standing, and the fear of new hostilities on the part of this empire still lives at Jerusalem, and its yoke was still oppressive (i. 13 f., ii. 1). Ch. iii. 8 ff. gives more definite intimation that a conquest of No-Amon, *i.e.* Thebes, in Upper Egypt, had taken place a short time before. As, then, this event is to be referred to the capture by the Assyrians, which took place in the year 664 or soon afterwards (see on iii. 10), the oracle of Nahum will belong to about 660 B.C. (So also Strack in *Handwörterb.*, 2 ed. i. 157 = 3 ed. i. 236.) That this prophet first alluded in this way to the fall of Thebes some decades afterwards (Steiner) is highly improbable, and is ill supported by the statement that it was impossible about 660 to foretell the catastrophe of Nineveh with such certainty. Nahum's appearance consequently falls into the reign of Manasseh (698–643), who figures among the tributaries of Asshurbanipal, and somewhat later was even carried prisoner to Babylon (Schrader, ii. 52 ff.).

In point of form Nahum's oracles are among the most beautiful products of prophetic poetry, as Lowth already rightly emphasised (*De Sacra Poesi Hebr.*): Ex omnibus minoribus prophetis nemo videtur æquare sublimitatem, ardorem, et audaces spiritus Nahumi. Adde quod ejus vaticinium integrum ac justum est poema; exordium magnificum est et plane augustum; apparatus ad excidium Niniviæ ejusque excidii descriptio et amplificatio ardentissimis coloribus exprimitur et admirabilem habet evidentiam et pondus. The stamp of these oracles, in fact, is thoroughly lyrical; the delineations are bold, vivid, picturesque. In short, measured beats the lan-

guage sweeps along like a threatening storm-flood, bringing destruction to the luxurious capital. As the judgment on Nineveh forms the sole subject, the inward aspect of prophecy does not indeed find such full expression as in Micah or Isaiah; but the grand revelation of the God who guides the world's fortunes (ch. i. 2 ff.), who also at last avenges the crimes of the impregnable capital (iii. 1 ff.), and trust in whom is a source of purest peace (i. 7, ii. 1), secures to this oracle a deeper significance than its poetical beauty. The fulfilment which it found (see close of ch. iii.) stamps the seal upon it.

Monograph on Nahum: O. Strauss, *Nahumi de Nino vaticinium explan.*, 1853.

I. 1. Oracle respecting Nineveh, prophecy-book of Nahum the Elkoshite.

1. The True God and His Foe, Ch. i.

2. A God, who keeps jealousy and takes vengeance, is Yahveh; Yahveh takes vengeance, and is mighty in wrath;

Chapter I.

Ver. 1. משא נינוה, genit. obj., as in Isa. xiii. 1. See respecting משא, solemn utterance, Ewald: high oracle, *Proph. O. T.* iii. 193. This first part of the heading is indispensable, because otherwise the object of the threatening (ch. i. 8, 11) is not evident; but also the second part could not easily be absent, and awakens confidence by the statement about the author's origin, which is not given elsewhere. Only this second part (vision of Nahum the Elkoshite), in distinction from the first one, will not have been prefixed by Nahum himself, but by some other skilful hand; hence now a certain hiatus between the two halves. Respecting *Nahum the Elkoshite*, see the Introd. Ver. 2. קנוא, only again in Josh. xxiv. 19, alongside the more usual קַנָּא, Ex. xx. 5. This beginning leans on that passage of the Decalogue, but applies the jealousy of Yahveh to mean that He will not allow the heathen to attack His people with impunity; see on Joel ii. 18.—In this sense also the thrice-repeated word נקם (partic. as adjective).—נוטר, who keeps, reserves, namely, guilt

Yahveh takes vengeance on his adversaries, and reserves it for his enemies. 3. Yahveh is slow to wrath, but great in strength; and certainly he does not allow (the guilty) to go unpunished. Yahveh, in storm and whirlwind is his going, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. 4. Who rebukes the sea, when he makes it dry; and all the rivers he causes to dry up. Bashan withers and Carmel, and the shoot of Lebanon withers away. 5. The mountains shake before him, and the hills melt; and the earth is upheaved before his face, and the circle of the earth, and all who dwell therein. 6. Who can stand before his indignation, and who abide in his fierce wrath? His hot anger is poured out like fire, and the rocks are split before him. 7. Excellent is Yahveh as a refuge in the day of distress; and he knows those who trust in him. 8. But with an overflowing swell he makes an utter end of *its* place; and he pursues his enemies with

and vengeance. Ver. 3. ארך א׳, as in Joel ii. 13, but joined here, not with the usual ורב חסד, but וגדול כח: He is long-suffering indeed, letting the crime of Asshur go long unpunished; but He is so, not because He lacks power, or treats the guilty like the innocent. נקה, cf. Ex. xx. 7, with personal object; Joel iv. 21, with material object; absolutely in Ex. xxxiv. 7, as in the present passage.—One's conceptions of the majesty and vehement power of the God who will take vengeance on His enemies, can never be great enough. *His way, walk* = His proceeding.—שערה, with ש for ס, as in Job ix. 17.—The high-flying clouds are mere dust under His feet. Ver. 4. ויבישהו for וַיְיַבֵּשֵׁהוּ. The mightiest waters dry up, the most flowery (cf. Micah vii. 14) meadows wither at His rebuke. Ver. 5. God's appearance at Sinai is a type of this description, as of the one in Micah i. 3 f., etc.—The *earth heaves before Him* (starting up in fear): נשא, intrans., as in Hos. xiii. 1; Hab. i. 3. Ver. 6. נתך, Niph. = Kal, to be poured out. As to the matter, cf. Deut. iv. 24. Ver. 7. לְמָעוֹז, connected with טוב, is no Germanism (Kleinert), but good Semitic; cf. Gen. iii. 6.—הסי בו, Ps. ii. 12, v. 12. Ver. 8. Suddenly, like an overflowing stream, He approaches, utterly annihilating what He lays waste. The suff. in מקומה applies to Nineveh, in accordance with the heading. He pursues His fleeing enemies with the speed of the approaching night, which hides vale and hill from the belated traveller.

darkness. 9. What will ye devise against Yahveh? He makes an utter end. Not a second time shall the distress arise. 10. For though they be thickly woven together like thorn bushes, and soaked like their drink, they are devoured like fully dry stubble. 11. From thee has he gone forth who plotted evil against Yahveh, who counselled wicked things. 12. Thus says Yahveh: Although intact and so numerous, yet they are cut off, and he passes away; and although I have humbled thee, I will humble thee no more. 13. And now will I break in pieces his yoke from thee, and unloose thy bonds. 14. But concerning *thee* Yahveh will

Ver. 9. New plots proceed from Asshur against the land of Yahveh; but in vain, since the tribulation of the days of Sennacherib will not be repeated. Ver. 10. Assonance and rhythm in the final sound; cf. already נתכה, נתצו, ver. 7.—Properly, *woven to the point of thorn bushes*, i.e. woven as thick as thorn bushes. *Soaked like their drink*, as wet as their wine itself. The two participles intimate the state in which they are consumed by the flames, and indeed concessively, according to ver. 12 (Hitzig, Ewald). Allusion to the multitude of the Assyrians and the excessive carousings at the court of Sardanapalus.—מלא, adverbially (cf. Jer. xii. 6): in full count, completely. Ver. 11. The great guilt of Nineveh consists in the fact that out of it proceeded he who headed the worst plots against Yahveh, His city, and His sanctuary, Sennacherib; this reference does not preclude the possibility of similar plots being hatched at this time (ver. 9), which the prophet has before his eyes. Ver. 12. The thought is the same as in ver. 10, without figure, yet so that the figure of the thorns is still present in נגודו (with dagesh, according to the more exact editions).—שלמים, having gone forth uninjured, unweakened from the last conflicts. The first כֵּן = *ita ut sunt;* the second, its correlative.—ועבר, it is all over with the Assyrian, he passes away from the world's theatre. —At the close of the verse Jerusalem is addressed. Ver. 13. מוט, like מוטה, Jer. xxvii. 2. Thus in the prophet's days Judah was dependent on Asshur, paying it tribute; yet the relation was a strained one; they mistrusted each other, and so Jerusalem continually saw itself threatened. Ver. 14. The discourse turns again to the guilty Assyrian prince, and indeed the one reigning at present, who inherits the guilt of his forefathers, and therefore receives the sentence due to them. In accordance with

determine: there shall be no more seed of thy name. 15. From the house of thy God I will root out graven image and molten image. Thy grave I will prepare, for thou hast been found too light.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. i. The True God and His Foe. 1. The Avenging God, vv. 2–6; 2. His Proceeding towards Friend and Foe, vv. 7–14.

The introduction to the whole is a thrilling anthem to Yahveh the Lord, whose judicial action should be an object of terror to His enemies, although, thanks to His patience, it is often long-delayed. The obverse of this judicial retribution—salvation—coming to the faithful ones out of the judgment on God's enemies, appears in ver. 7, but only to pass again into menace of the judgment falling on the proud capital, out of which once already a reckless conqueror has proceeded with hostile plots against God's city and sanctuary, and whence an outbreak of new hostility threatens. Nineveh will be levelled to the ground, and the yoke it has imposed on Judah broken to pieces by the Lord.

2. Nineveh's Fall, Ch. ii.

1. Behold upon the mountains the feet of the joyful

the accents many join אישים ק׳ ומסכה to the foregoing ומסכה (and thy molten image I make thy grave), which, however, is harsh and against the usual conjunction of פסל ומסכה (Deut. xxvii. 15, etc.). It were better to supply בית אלהיך as object to אישים, which would then allude to Sennacherib's fate, Isa. xxxvii. 38. Still the corresponding suffix is wanting in the verb.—*Thou hast become light*, i.e. been found too light, namely, in God's balance, by which the worth of a people or man is measured.

Chapter II.

Ver. 1. The messenger, who comes over the mountains surrounding Jerusalem to announce Nineveh's fall, publishes

messenger, who publishes peace! Keep, O Judah, thy feasts, perform thy vows: for no more shall the wicked one pass over thee; he is utterly rooted out. 2. A destroyer marches up before thee: See to the rampart! Look out on the way! Strengthen the loins, fortify thy strength well. 3. For Yahveh causes the pride of Jacob to return like the pride of Israel. For the plunderers have stripped (them) and destroyed their tendrils. 4. The shield of his mighty men is shining red, the defenders are clothed in purple: the iron (fittings) of the chariots spurt fire on the day when he pre-

peace and prosperity, שלום, for such is the meaning to Jerusalem of that catastrophe.—It will not suffer a second time what it suffered under Sennacherib, ch. i. 9.—בליעל, here (differently ch. i. 11) treated in a personal sense, and indeed as *nomen proprium*.—נכרת, not partic., but 3 perf. Ver. 2. Address to Asshur-Nineveh. מפיץ, properly the scatterer. A hostile ruler is meant, evidently the king of Babylon.—על פניך, properly over thy front.—נצור, absol. infin. for imperative. Ver. 3. שוב, transitively, as in Hos. vi. 11 and elsewhere.—*Jacob* seems to refer to Judah alongside *Israel* - Joseph, Obad. 18. Still better, Kleinert understands by Jacob the humbled, crippled nation of the present in need of grace, and by Israel the complete nation of the past in possession of divine grace. The glory of the latter becomes then the standard for the glorifying of the former. As בקק is especially used of vine-shoots (Hos. x. 1), the following metaphor was suggested: They have *destroyed* the fruitful *tendrils* (sing. Ezek. xv. 2) of the vine, which is here=Israel, as if it were useless bramble (ch. i. 10). Ver. 4. The *shield of his* heroes, either the besieger's (ver. 2), or better Yahveh's (ver. 3), according to the following מאדם—הכינו (Pual with *ŏ* instead of *ŭ*, as also in iii. 7; cf. Ges. § 52, Anm. 4), *reddened*, not indeed with blood, as the battle is not yet begun, but with shining metal, which, however, gleams blood-red in a fearful way; in the same way מתלעים (from תולע), *purple-coloured*, applies to the martial robes. Red, as Kleinert observes, was a favourite colour of the Medes and also of the Babylonians (cf. Ezek. xxiii. 14); on the other hand, that of the Assyrians was blue or violet (Ezek. xxiii. 6, xxvii. 23 f.).—פלדה, iron or steel (here only), fire spurts from the iron fittings of the war-chariots, properly "in fire of iron are the chariots."—The

pares it, and the cypresses are brandished. 5. The chariots bear themselves in the open places as mad things, they dash round the markets; to look at they are like torches, they dart along like lightning-flashes. 6. He calls to his nobles: they stumble in their goings; they haste to the city wall, when the storming-cover is (already) erected. 7. The gates of the rivers are opened, and the palace shall be dissolved.

cypresses, *i.e.* spear-shafts of cypress wood. Ver. 5. הלל, in Hithpo., to rage, to act madly; here to dash wildly about. חוצות and רחבות are not the streets and squares within the city, so that the chariots would be the Assyrian ones (so Ewald, Kleinert, *et al.*), as the comparison to torches and lightnings cannot be depreciatory, but pictures the terrors of the scene; rather they are the open spaces lying outside the city wall, where the hostile war-chariots can drive unhindered, and chase off or tread down the defenders with lightning-like speed, so that the preparations may be completed for the proper siege and assault.—ישקק, Joel ii. 9, to run about; here Hithpal, stronger. Ver. 6. The Assyrian monarch, surprised in his careless carousing, arouses himself and *calls on his nobles* to rush to the walls to drive back the enemy already thundering at the gates. Half-drunk, and therefore stumbling, as well as stumbling in fright and confusion, they reel to the wall, where the *storming-cover* of the besiegers is already *erected*, and so the best chance of resistance is already lost. —סכך, Hitz. understands it of the covering party of defenders. Rather it is to be understood of the *testudo*, the *storming-shelter*, a wicker-work, under which the enemy are able to get near the city walls. Such instruments are shown in the Assyrian representations. Ver. 7. The interpretation is difficult and various. By שערי ה' is usually understood the city gates closed towards the waters, which would be opened by the assaulting enemy. But why should the enemy attack just these gates, which would be the hardest to take? There also certainly exists a connection between נהרות and נמוג. The besiegers opening artificial sluices in order to flood the city would suit the expression better, but would not suit the situation, as we should rather expect the besieged to raise the height of the water so as to keep the enemy at a distance. Kleinert's explanation is best: The *gates* of the *streams*, which *open* without help of man, are, according to analogy, the windows of heaven, Gen. vii. 11, or the bars of the sea, Job xxxviii. 10; and their opening is to be understood

8. And it is settled: she is made bare, taken away, and her maidens mourn like the sound of doves, they beat on their breasts. 9. And Nineveh—like a reservoir are her waters: yet these flee away. "Stand now, stand." But no one gets them to turn. 10. Plunder ye silver, plunder gold! And inexhaustible is the treasure, a great multitude of every kind of precious jewels. 11. Emptying and stripping and emptied out! And the heart melts, and the knees shake, and trembling in all loins, and the countenances of all of them lose their brightness. 12. Where is the dwelling of the lions, and that which was a feeding-place of the young lions, where the lion walks, the lioness, the lion's whelp undisturbed? 13. The lion that carried off as much as his whelps needed, and

according to Gen. vii. 11. A higher hand unlooses the watery element, by which Nineveh is almost surrounded, and that for its destruction. These waters swell with unwonted might, so that the towering palace goes to pieces in them. The latter is to be conceived as terrace-shaped and of colossal size, so that surrounded by the raging flood, according to the poetical phrase, it melts therein. See the fulfilment in Ctesias after ch. iii. Ver. 8. הֻצַּב, Pual of נצב, it is determined, decreed; it is a settled thing. So most simply de Dieu and Seb. Schmidt early. Rückert, Ewald, *et al.*, take Huzzab as the proper name of the queen; but without evidence. Hitzig would read הַצָּב, the lizard. The subj. of *she is made bare, carried away* (Hoph. more violent than Niph., 2 Sam. ii. 27; Jer. xxxvii. 11), is the queen of Nineveh, whose *maidens* are the subordinate towns. —Instead of לִבְבֵהֶן, Hitz., Stade would read לְבֻבֵהֶן. The plur. of לֵב otherwise runs לְבָבוֹת. Smiting the breast, a well-known mark of mourning among women. Ver. 9. Nineveh is like a vast reservoir, because in it men and precious things are gathered from all lands; but now they are scattered.—Read מֵימֶי הִיא (LXX, Vulg.), the waters of themselves=which are themselves. והמה applies to these waters. None of the fugitives turns at the cry "Stand." Ver. 10. תכונה (cf. Ezek. xliii. 11), fitting, furnishing. What the plunderers find has no limit. Ver. 11. The close of the verse is from Joel ii. 6. Ver. 12. *Lions* appear very frequently in the Assyrian representations, and attached as ornaments. They were in this respect the favourite animal of this nation, and were therefore specially suited to stand for the royal family. Ver. 13. The modified

strangled for his lionesses, and filled his caves with prey, and his dwellings with the torn? 14. Behold I am against thee, is the oracle of Yahveh of hosts, and make her equipage go up in smoke, and the sword shall devour thy young lions: and I destroy thy prey from off the earth, and the voice of thy ambassadors shall no more be heard.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. ii. Nineveh's Fall. The fuller description of this catastrophe, which follows here, is beautifully introduced by the joyful spectacle of the messenger bringing the news of it to Jerusalem; thus the comforting element contained in this terrible event for the city of Yahveh is first emphasised. The Horatian saying: Nunc est bibendum, nunc pede libero pulsanda tellus, finds here a more worthy counterpart of sanctified joy. Zion may now without fear celebrate the feasts of its God, and perform the vows made in time of distress, since the dreaded city, as the messenger passing before the prophet's spiritual vision announces, is fallen! The deliverance experienced is here certainly negative: the overthrow of the menacing hostile world-power. The oracle is applied already in Isa. lii. 7 to a more positive and spiritual gospel, and then completely in Rom. x. 15. It is only after this exultant cry, which makes known beforehand the happy issue, that the drama of Nineveh's investment and capture opens before our eyes, awakening all the greater sympathy. In comparison with ch. i., the scene is described with heightened vividness, and made to stand out before the gaze.

form גֹּרותיו instead of גּוּר, elsewhere only in Jer. li. 38; cf. Nah. ii. 4, iii. 7. Ver. 14. מלאככה, rare for מלאָכָיִךְ, probably for כֵּכִי, and this from כַּיְכִי, Ges. § 91, 2, Anm. 2. No more will be heard the voice of the legates, whom the imperial city sends everywhere with its commands.

3. The Horrors of the Imperial City, and the Judgment, Ch. III.

1. Woe to the bloody city, all full of deceit, of violence, which will not cease to plunder! 2. Hark, cracking of whips and rumbling of wheels, leaping steeds and bounding chariots! 3. Prancing riders and sword-flashings and glint of spears! And masses of slain, and a great multitude of carcases and corpses without end, so that they stumble over their corpses! 4. For the multitude of the whoredoms of the harlot,—the attractive, bewitching one,—who sold nations by her whorish arts, and tribes by her witchcrafts. 5. Behold, I am against thee, is the oracle of Yahveh of hosts; and I discover thy train on thy face, and show nations thy nakedness and kingdoms thy shame. 6. And I cast filth upon thee, and dishonour thee and set thee as a spectacle. 7. And it shall

Chapter III.

Ver. 1. *Bloody city*, cf. Ezek. xxiv. 9.—With לא ימיש, cf. Jer. xvii. 8. Ver. 2. Pictorial description of the advancing foe. רקר, Piel; cf. Joel ii. 5, to spring; here of the bounding motion of chariots on roads full of obstacles. Ver. 3. עלה, Hiphil, of the rider; Kal, of the horse; Jer. xlvi. 9.—Flame and lightning often for blade of sword and spear. Ver. 4. The cause of the judgment introduced by מִן. A seductive harlot and witch at the same time, she lured the nations to destruction.—מכר, to sell; here = to consign to ruin, unless, with Hitz., we assign to the word, according to the Arabic, the meaning "ensnare." In the whoredom, allusion is made to the enticements to impure lust of every kind issuing from the gay, wanton city; the magic points more definitely still to the unholy powers by which heathenism is controlled, and which it turns to profit. By its fascinating beauty and demonic powers Nineveh exerts a perilous influence on the nations. Ver. 5. Insulting treatment such as an unchaste woman merits; Jer. xiii. 26 borrows from here (cf. ver. 22).—מער = עֶרְוָה. The desolation of the city referred to will render her abominable to the nations who fell victims to her cunning witcheries. Ver. 6. שקצים, here not idols, since otherwise the suffix would be used (thy idols), but more generally: abominations, filth.—כראי (pausal form), like a spectacle, warning example, *παράδειγμα*. Ver. 7. נדד, to slip

come to pass that whoever sees thee flees away from thee, and says: Nineveh is overwhelmed. Who will lament her, whence should I seek comforters for thee? 8. Art thou better than No-Amon? which sits on the Nile streams,—waters round about her,—whose rampart is the sea, and she has her wall on the sea. 9. Cush is her strength, and Egypt, and there is no end: Put and the Libyans were among thy helpers. 10. *She also* went in captivity into banishment; her children also were slaughtered at all the street-corners; and upon her nobles the lot was cast, and all her great men were

timidly away; on the other hand, נוּד as in Jer. xv. 5; Isa. li. 19.—שׁדדה, Micah ii. 4. Ver. 8. הֲתֵיטבי, for euphony's sake, for הֲהֵיטבי, Ges. § 70, Anm. 2.—The city *No*, seat of the god *Amon* (see Comm. on Jer. xlvi. 25) = Thebes, capital of Upper Egypt; it is used as a comparison because of its position on so mighty a river, and especially the fate it recently underwent, which neither the river nor its god Amon could avert.—חיל as in Isa. xxvi. 1. Hitz., Kleinert translate: "who (or where) was a fortress of the sea." The meaning rather is, that it had its fortress on the sea, and its wall on it. מִיָּם, from the sea, in form of the sea. Ver. 9. Nor were there wanting nations who helped it. *Cush* = Ethiopia (Isa. xviii. 1), generally stood in close relations with the capital of Upper Egypt. After LXX, Syr., etc., read עָצְמָהּ, without its being necessary on this account to read בעזרתה. At the close, description passes into address.—*Put*, here distinguished from the *Libyans*, with which the versions otherwise identify them, a people bordering on them in North Africa, where in Mauritania, Josephus and the Greek authors know a river Phut, Joseph. *Ant.* i. 6. 2. The Put are perhaps to be located west of the Lubim, east of the Ludim. See particulars in Riehm's *Handwörterb.* 1250 (by Kautzsch). Ver. 10. This reference to a *conquest of Thebes*, of which there was so little confirmation from history that certain scholars describe it as an interpolation in the present prophecy, has been illustrated by an inscription of Asshurbanipal, son and successor of Esarhaddon, who relates that he smote the army of the Egyptian ruler Urdamani (= Rud Amon), captured and plundered his capital No. "Gold, silver . . . garments . . . horses, men, and women . . . they took away from it in countless multitude, ordained them to captivity; to Nineveh, my seat of government, they brought them in good condition, and they kissed my feet." As this campaign seems

bound in chains. 11. *Thou also* shalt be drunken, shalt be covered up; thou also shalt seek a refuge from the enemy. 12. All thy strongholds are fig-trees with early figs; when one shakes them, they fall into the eater's mouth. 13. Behold, thy people are women in thy midst; the gates of thy land shall certainly be opened to thy enemies: fire consumes thy bolts. 14. Draw the water for the siege, strengthen thy fortresses, go into the mud and tread the clay, lay hold of the brick-mould! 15. There shall the fire devour thee, the sword destroy thee; it shall devour thee like the locust. Make thyself many as the locusts, many as the grasshoppers—16. thou hast multiplied thy traders more than the stars of heaven—

to have taken place soon after the installation of that Egyptian king, and his predecessor Tirhakah died in 664 B.C., the present oracle will have been written about the year 660. The fall of Thebes plainly belongs to the most recent past of the prophet. See Schrader, vol. ii. 149. Ver. 11. גם אתּ corresponds to גם היא, ver. 10. It will happen to thee, O Nineveh, as to Thebes.—Drunkenness means here stupefying by pain and deadly anguish. The same sense, as Steiner rightly states, belongs to נעלמה, hid, *i.e.* not "unknown," but *powerless*, according to a figure of speech common in Semitic tongues; cf. עלף, etc. Ver. 12. The figure pictures the ease with which the fortified cities of the land are overthrown. Ver. 14. *Water of investment*, i.e. as provision for investment.—The walls consisted of bricks; to strengthen them bricks are to be made and burnt. Xen. *Anab.* iii. 4. 11, speaks of the πλίνθινος τεῖχος of Nineveh. מַלְבֵּן, perhaps rather *brick-mould* than brick-oven, the latter of which would not agree with the taking hold (Ewald). Ver. 15. *There* the fire will consume thee during thy preparations, the fire bursting in a sense from the burning brick-oven. In point of fact, the fire is destructive to the houses of the city, the sword to the inhabitants.—בילק, still dependent on the preceding verb (cf. on Joel i. 4). The point of comparison is the crowd of the slain and the ease of their overthrow. In the former respect the prophet takes up the figure again: Make thee ever so numerous, multiply thyself like the locusts; in order then, in ver. 16 f., to turn it another way, namely, to use it to set forth the fleeing away of Nineveh's glory. Ver. 16. The concourse of people, brought together in Nineveh by com-

the locust sheds its skin and is fled away. 17. Thy princely ones are like grasshoppers, and thy commanders like swarms of locusts—which encamp on the walls in the cold day; when the sun has risen, they have vanished, and one knows not the place where they are. 18. Thy shepherds are asleep, O king of Asshur, thy nobles are quiet; thy people is scattered on the mountains, and none gathers them. 19. There is no relief for thy wound, thy hurt is deadly. All who hear the news of thee will clap their hands at thee; for upon whom has not thy wickedness passed continually?

Exposition.

Contents of ch. iii. The Horrors of the Imperial City and the Judgment upon it.

Ch. iii. has more of an elegiac strain than the preceding one; it is like a mourning-song of the prophet over the deep moral as well as political debasement of Nineveh. Vv. 2 f. indeed picture again the siege and assault with the deepest pathos; but then the accusing tone, begun in ver. 1, is main-

mercial intercourse, will just as rapidly disperse, or flee away, as the יֶלֶק, when it has cast its skin, draws its wings from the sheath (this is the meaning of פִּשְׁטוֹ). Thereby is not meant here the single insect, but the entire brood of these insects, which take to flight when they reach this stage. Ver. 17. Just as rapidly the countless, pompous army of officials vanishes. מְנַזְּרִים, here only = נְזִירִים, perhaps a Hebraised, originally Assyrian, word (Ges. *Handwörterb.* 10 ed.), with dagesh dirimens. —טַפְסְרִים, see Comm. on Jer. li. 27.—נוֹב נוֹבִי (cf. on Amos vii. 1), genitive connection (possible, as the idea of quality lies in the noun) by way of climax; cf. Hos. x. 15; 2 Kings xix. 23.—נדד, Pual. Ver. 18. *Asleep*, euphemistic description of death; so also *being at rest*.—פּוּשׁ, Niph., with tone on the penultimate syllable, and without dagesh in שׁ; cf. Baer on the word. Ver. 19. כֵּהָה (here only), properly quenching, soothing.—נחלה, Niphal to the Hiphil; Micah vi. 13.—The address to the king of Assyria, of course not merely a single individual, also rules here still. Clapping the hands is here a sign of malicious joy.

tained (vv. 4–7); the language grows calmer. It casts a glance, far away, at the fate which overtook the capital of Upper Egypt (vv. 8–10), in order to suggest a similar one in the case of Nineveh (vv. 11–15*a*). Last of all (from 15*b* on) the figure of the locust-swarm, whose countless host vanishes just as quickly as it came, is applied under different aspects to the dissolving multitude of the population of Nineveh.

The fulfilment of this oracle of Nahum about the overthrow of Nineveh is obvious. It took place when, about fifty years after the utterance of this prophecy, the Medes first formed an alliance with the Lydians, with whom they were engaged in war, and then made common cause with the rebel viceroy at Babylon, Nabopolassar, against Nineveh. After varying conflicts Nineveh, the imperial capital, succumbed. The date of its fall cannot be stated exactly, but it lies not later than 606 B.C., perhaps some years earlier. Cf. also Schrader, Riehm's *Handwörterb.* 1094 f. "Later (than 606) it cannot be put, since Jer. xxv. 19–26 enumerates the nations existing in the East in this year (or in the next?) without saying a word of Nineveh or Assyria. The last king of Assyria was Esarhaddon II., called Sarakos by the Greek writers. He has left us only a few accounts, which were written when his enemies were gathering about him, and his people were in vain calling on their gods for help. The Medes, the Minni, and the Kimmerians or Gomer had united together, and were advancing steadily on Nineveh. The border towns had been carried by storm (cf. Nah. iii. 12); the enemy extended like a flood over the entire country. In their distress the Assyrian rulers ordered a solemn fast (cf. Jonah iii. 5 ff.) for one hundred days and nights, and besought the sun-god to forgive their sins. But all was in vain. The measure of Assyria's sin was full; the time was come when the waster was to be himself wasted, and Nineveh, as God's prophet had threatened, was to be razed to the very ground" (Sayce).

Ctesias has told the story of the siege and capture of Nineveh at greatest length. Many features in his account vividly remind us of Nahum's prediction. Such is the statement that, after several victories of the Assyrians, the balance of fortune turned against them one night, when they had abandoned themselves in careless security to luxurious enjoyment, especially drunkenness (ch. i. 10, ii. 6), just as the last king of Nineveh is characterised by the Greeks as an effeminate glutton. Thus the camp was taken, and the fugitives driven into the city. The king now plucked up courage, undertook the defence of the city, and gave the command of the army to Salæmenes, his brother-in-law. But the latter was defeated, and the king shut up in the city (Nah. ii. 5, 6). Nevertheless, the ardent besiegers were unable to master it. Then, in the third year of the siege, the Tigris, swollen by extraordinary rainfalls, caused great devastation, and carried away the city-wall for a length of twenty stadia. The king, who had received from his forefathers an oracle to the effect that no one would take the city unless the river became its enemy, saw his peril, and burnt himself in his palace. No doubt the account of Ctesias springs from a fantastically embellished source. Yet it also contains true tradition, to which the features just mentioned may very well belong. In the same way it is quite probable that immense booty was to be obtained in Nineveh (Nah. ii. 10–14), the proceeds of so many conquests and tributes having been accumulated there. The booty came partly to Babylon, partly to Media. Finally, the burning and total desolation of the city (Nah. i. 8, iii. 15–19) is universally attested. It then suddenly vanished from history. Strabo, xvi. 1. 3 : *ἡ μὲν οὖν Νῖνος πόλις ἠφανίσθη παραχρῆμα μετὰ τὴν τῶν Σύρων κατάλυσιν.* Xenophon (*Anab.* iii. 4. 7 ff.) journeyed past it, but found only desolate ruins, which men avoided because a terrible divine doom was supposed to have fallen on it. Cf. also Jerome on Nah. iii. 7 : Qui viderit

ruinas Ninives et positam eam omnibus in exemplum, expavescet et mirabitur. Only since 1842 have the huge piles of rubbish been explored, and the witnesses to Assyrian greatness been thence brought more and more to light.

HABAKKUK.

Habakkuk's name, חֲבַקּוּק (LXX: Ἀμβακούμ; Vulg.: Habacuc), signifies embracing (from חָבַק). Luther: "Habakkuk has a right name for his office. For Habakkuk means: a heartener, or one who takes another to his heart and his arms. He does this in his prophecy, comforting his people, and taking them into his arms, *i.e.* he comforts and sustains them, as one soothes a poor weeping child or man, telling it to be quiet or content, because, if God will, it will be better." Certainly, in giving the name the purpose perhaps was rather to describe him as heartened (not heartener). More improbable, on linguistic grounds, is the explanation of Jerome, according to which Habakkuk was so called as a wrestler with God, and that *luctator fortis et rigidus*, in which, no doubt, there is an allusion to a peculiarity of this prophet. As to his personality nothing further is known. That he was an acknowledged prophet in Judæa is clear from the epithet "the prophet," i. 1, iii. 1. According to a legendary tradition, he belonged to the tribe of Simeon, was a native of Bethzocker, fled on the invasion of the Chaldæans to Ostracine (a town lying between Egypt, Palestine, and Arabia), but afterwards returned to his own country, where he devoted himself to agriculture, and lived until shortly before the return of the exiles from Babylon. His grave was shown in Keilah, in the tribe of Judah; cf. Knobel. *Prophetism der Hebräer*, ii. 291 f. What is said in the apocryphal addition to the book of Daniel, "Bel and the Dragon," ver. 33 ff., about Habakkuk having brought food in a miraculous way to Daniel in the

lions' den, is to be regarded as an idle story. More notice is due to the statement found before this apocryphal narrative in the LXX (Cod. Chisianus): ἐκ προφητείας Ἀμβακοὺμ υἱοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς Λευΐ, as this Levitical origin would cast light on the musical character of the prayer, ch. iii. (see especially on ver. 19).

As relates to the date of Habakkuk's appearance, his prophetic range of vision is already ruled by the Chaldæans, who, according to ch. i. 5, will oppress Judæa in the lifetime of the present generation. Yet, according to the same passage, this is quite incredible to the people, and therefore the probability of such a development was not yet apparent. To go back to Manasseh's days (Delitzsch, *Messianic Prophecies*, p. 172), when certainly, according to 2 Kings xxi. 10 ff. (cf. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 10), certain prophets announced similar misfortune to the land, is not wise. Then בימיכם, ch. i. 5, would not be fulfilled. Also under this king, above all, idolatry would have been named as a ground of the judgment, whereas injustice and oppression take this place, ch. i. 2–4. If Habakkuk himself, as iii. 19 seems to intimate, arranged his psalm, ch. iii., in musical form for temple use, this supposes that the temple worship, disturbed in Manasseh's days, gave no offence to the devout. Yet the latter argument, which would lead back to the days after Josiah's temple reform, is, for several reasons, not convincing. That Habakkuk prophesied under Josiah himself is a view shared by several older writers (also Del. formerly), which, however, does not recommend itself; as, on the contrary, a promise was given to this king by the prophetess Huldah, who then stood in the foreground, that the land should be spared during his lifetime, 2 Kings xxii. 18 ff. Hence, with the majority of modern writers, we come to Jehoiakim's days (609–598, B.C.) The only dispute then is, whether Habakkuk's oracle is to be placed before or after the battle of Carchemish (605). But after that decisive battle Habakkuk could no longer describe

the approach of the Chaldæans as incredible (i. 5); on the contrary, it was then almost self-evident that they would advance against Egypt, and consequently also against Jehoiakim, who was entirely dependent on that land. The oracle is therefore to be placed shortly before that event; similarly Jer. xlvi. So also Kleinert in his *Commentary*, who, however, in *Handwörterb.* p. 548, seems to come down to the time after the battle, like, *e.g.*, Schrader in Schenkel, *Bibel-Lex.* ii. 556.

Thus Habakkuk was Jeremiah's contemporary, with whom also he shows points of contact, the originality remaining on Habakkuk's side; cf. Hab. i. 8 with Jer. iv. 13, v. 6. He is in touch with Zephaniah, especially in ii. 20; cf. Zeph. i. 7, which Delitzsch adduces for an earlier date in Habakkuk. But although Zephaniah doubtless borrows more than Habakkuk, who is on the whole original, here the relation of priority may possibly be the reverse; see the remarks of Kleinert in *Comm.* p. 128. If we find marks of dependence even in Habakkuk, and if in general his style is more forcible and compact than Zephaniah's, this difference depends on the subjective powers of these prophets, not on their date, as in point of time they stand too near each other for this.

In point of form Habakkuk's writing has the peculiarity, distinctive of him also intellectually, that it consists of a continuous dialogue between God and the prophet; see the Table of Contents at the end. Objective revelation, and expression of the feelings it elicits, alternate throughout. More than others, therefore, this writing has a dramatic and lyrical impress. Habakkuk is the suppliant among the prophets. He shows the closest sympathy with those whom he is forced to complain of. Cf. Kleinert: "Peculiar to him is the thoroughly lyrical strain of his language, in which Isaiah's force and Jeremiah's tender feeling are united." The forceful, daring style, under complete control, is rightly admired. Cf. De Wette: "If Habakkuk is to be compared in prophetic delivery with the best prophets, —a Joel, Amos, Nahum, Isaiah,

—he excels in his lyrical piece, ch. iii., everything which Hebrew poetry has to show of this kind; he commands the greatest strength and richness, the loftiest enthusiasm, along with a due measure of beauty and clearness. His rhythm is at once the most free and regular; ch. ii. 6–20 is strophic in plan. The language is fresh and pure."

Of monographs there is especially to be mentioned: Franz Delitzsch, *Der Prophet H. ausgelegt,* 1843. Cf. his treatise, *De Hab. proph. vita utque ætate,* 1842; and in *Rudelbach and Guericke's Zeitschr.* 1842, i.: *Ueber Abfassungszeit und Plan der Prophetie Habakkuks.*—In later days only: L. Reinke, *Der Proph. Hab.,* 1870.

I. 1. The oracle which Habakkuk the prophet saw.

2. How long, O Yahveh, shall I call for help, and thou hearest not,—(how long) cry to thee: Violence! and thou savest not? 3. Why dost thou cause me to see iniquity and lookest on oppression, and destruction and violence are before my eyes; while there is strife, and contention rises up? 4. Therefore the law is powerless, and right never comes to

Chapter I.

Ver. 1. המשא, on Nahum i. 1.—*Saw,* on Isa. ii. 1.—*Habakkuk,* respecting him see Introd. Ver. 2. שוע, Piel, to call for help; cf. the noun, Ex. ii. 23.—אזעק, still subordinate to עד־אנא. Perhaps Job xix. 7 floats before the prophet's mind. Like that patient one under his unjust fate—the living conscience of Judah, he suffers under the unrepented iniquity done in the land. Ver. 3 also re-echoes Num. xxiii. 21, according to which description of Balaam one ought not to see in Israel folly, worthless practices, immorality (elsewhere און, especially idolatry), and unjust plunder of the poor by the rich (עמל). Ver. 4. על־כן, in the absence of righteous judges the best law is of no use (Hitzig differently: because thou lookest on quietly), not even the divine Torah, which so warmly defends the oppressed.—פוג, properly to grow cold, to lose vital force; it becomes a dead letter.—With יצא cf. Zeph. iii. 5, נתן לאור.—לנצח, join with ולא. No decision, putting an end to caprice and injustice, comes to light, however eagerly it is looked for.

the light. For the wicked besets the righteous on every side; therefore right comes forth perverted.

5. Look round among the nations, and behold, and be astonished, yea, wonder! For I work a work in your days—you will not believe, if one tell it. 6. For behold I will stir up the Chaldæans, the fierce and swift nation, which traverses the breadths of the earth, to take possession of dwelling-places which are not its own. 7. Terrible and fearful it is; from it goes forth its mandate and its majesty. 8. And

Hitzig, Ewald, Kleinert give to נצח the unprovable meaning: truth, uprightness, so that it = לאמת, Isa. xlii. 3. כרת, Piel, and here Hiphil: to surround in hostile sense, so that the righteous man cannot come to his rights. As evil-doers join together in such an evil ring, even *judicial decisions* come forth, *not straight*, but in *perverted* form. In a formal sense certainly judgments still see the light, but so that in them right is perverted to its opposite. Ver. 5 begins God's answer addressed to the people: Let them direct their gaze to the heathen world, where shortly something most astonishing (תמה, Hithp. and Kal, for the sake of emphasis, as in Zeph. ii. 1) will take place, which at the time would still sound to them like a fable, if it were told them. Ver. 6. The chief purport of the new, surprising crisis is here prophetically announced: the appearance of the *Chaldæans* in Hither Asia and in Palestine. — כשדים, the Chaldee of the Inscriptions (the sibilant is probably more original than the *l*, which passed over to the Greeks also), the inhabitants of Babylon.—מר, rough, hasty, sharp, passionate, or fierce.—נהר, Niph. here; not: to tumble over; but: to hasten, to be swift.—*Which goes to the breadths of the earth*, i.e. traverses the earth in its whole length and breadth. Ver. 7. מימנו, according to Hitzig, Kleinert, *et al.*, is used antithetically: from himself, acknowledging none higher, therefore not from God. Delitzsch more correctly finds the thought: it prescribes laws, and sets itself up as Lord. יצא shows that the reference is to expressions of its supreme will. משפטו is the law which it makes binding on nations. ישאתו, its dignity = the demands of its dignity. Ver. 8*a* recurs in varied form in Jer. iv. 13, v. 6. חדד, to be sharp, keen; here to move hastily, eagerly.—*Wolves of the evening* (cf. Zeph. iii. 3), wolves, which in the evening twilight approach human dwellings in search of food. פרש, to overflow, then of horses, calves, etc.: to behave proudly, leap up, rear, dash along. The repetition of פרשיו is strange. That it has a different

fleeter than leopards are its horses, and more savage than wolves of the evening; and its horsemen bound along, yea, its horsemen come from far: they fly like the eagle which hastens to devour. 9. They come all of them for violence; their faces stretch forwards; and he gathers together captives like sand. 10. And he makes sport of kings, and rulers are a derision to him; he laughs at every stronghold, heaps up dust and takes it. 11. Then he marches on, a whirlwind, and passes by—but *he is guilty of sin to whom his own strength is his god.*

12. Art *thou*, then, not of old time, O Yahveh, my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O Yahveh, thou hast set him for judgment; and thou, O Rock, hast appointed him

meaning the second time (first horses, then riders) is not to be supposed; on the other hand, the repetition as a poetical figure is intelligible; cf. משחק and ישחק, ver. 10. Ver. 9. מְגַמָּה, scarcely (from גמם, to heap) "heap," aggregate, but probably eager desire (cf. גמא, to drink up): their faces strive eagerly forwards. They are all simply conceived as pressing forwards. The sense is plain, and is wrongly made ridiculous by Hitzig, who, on his part, by translating "eastwards," arrives at the absurd notion that the Chaldæans are already on the march from Jaffa, and therefore only a few miles distant from Jerusalem when the prophet so spoke. Ver. 10. *Heaps up dust and takes it.* The capture of such strongholds (by means of a bank) is as easy to him as child-play. Ver. 11 is to be so divided, in opposition to the accents, that the halving falls at ויעבר. Then, after effecting a great conquest, he passes on at once, with the speed of a whirlwind, to new deeds. רוּחַ, not the proper subject, but in apposition thereto. But in view of the unparalleled successes, the prophet appends a warning. These successes are full of peril for him, because, instead of giving God the glory, he admires and deifies only his own strength, cf. Isa. x. 5 ff., 13. Ver. 12. The voice of the suppliant prophet is again plainly heard, speaking in the name of his nation (hence *my* God, *my* Holy One). From the fact that God willed from of old to belong to this nation, he draws the assurance: we shall not finally perish; it can only be a chastisement temporarily inflicted by a God who is immutably faithful (צוּר, Deut. xxxii. 37). Utterly mistaken is the emendation, לא תמות, proposed by Ewald and commended by Bleek, which is to be referred to God! Ver. 13.

for chastisement. 13. Thou who art of too pure eyes to regard wickedness, and canst not look on oppression, why wilt thou look on the transgressor, art silent when the wicked swallows him that is juster than he? 14. And makest men like the fish of the sea, the worm, which has no ruler over it? 15. He draws up all of them with the line, sweeps them along in his net, and gathers them together in his drag. On this account he rejoices and exults. 16. Therefore he sacrifices to his net, and burns incense to his drag. For by this his portion is made fat and his meat made rich. 17. Should he therefore empty his net, and go forth continually to slaughter nations without pity?

Cf. i. 3. If God has not left wrong unpunished in His people, He will also avenge it in its oppressors, as their cause is still more unrighteous than that of Judah.—בוגדים, not "plunderers" (Hitzig, Kleinert, *et al.*), a meaning not belonging to the word even in Isa. xxi. 2, xxiv. 16, xxxiii. 1, but betrayers, who rob God of His glory (ii. 4, i. 11), and men of their good right. The wicked man, here the violent conqueror, swallows the righteous, *i.e.* the weaker nation, disregarding its right to existence. Ver. 14. Fishes, not merely defenceless, but without rights; the worm has no master to protect it; cf. Prov. vi. 7, xxx. 27. Ver. 15. The fisher, *i.e.* the Chaldæan, draws up all (this crowd of nations, falling helplessly into his power like fish) with the line or net. The suffixes refer to אדם.—הַעֲלָה for הַעֲלֵה.—גרר, to draw, pull, drag.—חרם, net in general; מכמרת, fish-trap of thread, like the drag-net (מִכְמֹר). Ver. 16. Because everything succeeds with him, and he makes one capture after another, he then deifies even his *net* and *line*, *i.e.* his military power. Whether we are directly to suppose a worship of the sword, as, *e.g.*, among the Sarmates proper sacrifices were offered to this weapon (Herod. iv. 62), is very questionable, as the prophet would then name this, instead of using another concrete image of military power (the net). Moreover, nothing is known of such sword-worship among the Babylonians, but we do know of boastful praise of their own strength and skill in war. Cf. the language of the Assyrian, Isa. x. 13 f. Ver. 17. *Should he therefore*, because he is so skilful and lucky in this fishing (על כן, not: despite all this), be permitted to constantly empty his net in order again to fill it? תמיד belongs virtually also to the first clause.

II. 1. I will stand on my watch-tower, and set me on the pinnacle, and will look out to see what he will say to me, and what I shall reply to my complaint. 2. Then Yahveh answered me, and said: Write down the vision, and engrave it on tablets, that one may read it easily. 3. For the vision is until the appointed time; but it pants to the end, and will not deceive; though it delay, wait thou for it; for it verily comes, it lags not behind. 4. Behold, being puffed up, his

Chapter II.

Ver. 1. The *watch-tower*, to which Habakkuk betakes himself in order to receive the divine answer, is understood by Del., Klein., and the majority, according to Isa. xxi. 6 ff., in a purely spiritual sense of a state of inward preparation. But as the expression runs here, it is probable (so also Hitzig) that Habakkuk used to seek this inner disposition, which, of course, is the chief thing, on a particular elevated place, affording a wide outlook over the land, and so giving impulse to visions. Isa. x. 28 ff. also speaks of such a point of observation.—מצור, surrounding wall, pinnacle. —בִּי, see on Hos. i. 2.—תוכחת, properly reproof, here objection to the divine government starting from a moral basis. The phrase shows the freedom of the prophet's converse with God. Ver. 2. *Write down* for preservation, and *engrave* (as in Deut. xxvii. 8) on *tablets*, clay tablets are the most probable. These are only determined by the context, as the article does not denote the well-known official tablets. But perhaps the prophet is to expose them, possibly in the temple. כתב ובאר, hendiadys, write down, engraving on tablets.—*That he may run*, hasten on who reads it, *i.e.* any one may read it readily, go forward in reading without hindrance. Cf. Isa. viii. 1, where certainly the tablet is not to be publicly exposed, but like Isa. xxx. 8 (cf. Job xix. 23 f.), where the purpose appears which governs also in the present passage: to give to posterity (here to contemporaries), which sees the fulfilment, a proof, not to be forgotten or refuted, of the truth of the prediction. Ver. 3. *For waiting of the vision for the time fixed*, i.e. the purport of the vision is still delayed, lingers till the time fixed. עוד (Orelli, *Synon. der Zeit.* 31), as in Dan. xi. 35 and 1 Sam. xviii. 8. פּוּחַ, Hiphil, to pant, hence to hasten. The LXX, followed by Heb. x. 37, inaccurately make God or the Messiah the subject: ἐὰν ὑστερήσῃ, ὑπόμεινον αὐτόν, ὅτι ἐρχόμενος ἥξει καὶ οὐ μὴ χρονίσῃ. Rather the "vision" is meant, whose purport, indeed, is a manifestation of God, as ch. iii. shows. Ver. 4*a* refers to the

soul is not right in him. *But the righteous,—by his believing fidelity he shall live!*—5. Moreover, truly wine is a betrayer, and a boastful warrior will not remain quiet; one who has opened his throat wide like the underworld, and is as insatiable as death, and gathers to himself all nations, and heaps

Chaldæan, ver. 4*b* to the righteous man, for whom the prophet, in i. 13, has made intercession; it confirms the לא נמות, i. 12. The contrast between the overweening heathen and the righteous servant of God, involving also an opposite fate for the two, is here set forth in its ethical depth. עפלה, puffed up with pride, which is also treachery to God, want of straightness and sincerity (cf. i. 11, 13). The *just man*, on the other hand, shall *live*, continue in life, despite the fearfulness of the impending judgment (cf. Num. xxiv. 23).—באמונתו, on which the chief accent rests, belongs, despite the tiphchah standing with it (see Del. p. 50), to יחיה, not to צדיק. ב introduces the actual medium of life being preserved, as in Ezek. xviii. 22.—אמונה, properly steadfastness, moral trustworthiness, honesty, fidelity; but here, in keeping with the contrast, a loyal attitude to God, and as such, according to Gen. xv. 6 (the noun here corresponds to the האמין there), is to be regarded as humble trust, therefore πίστις, faith, believing fidelity. This saves from death, because it is the fundamental element in righteousness. LXX erroneously באמונתי (cf. Heb. x. 38), whereas Paul uses the correct text as the basis, Rom. i. 17; Gal. iii. 11.—Del. (p. 63) calls attention to the fact that even the Talmud assigns a central significance to this passage; Gemara Makkoth f. 24*a*, it is said: David condensed the 613 Sinaitic laws into 11 (Ps. xv.), Isaiah into 6 (xxxiii. 15), Micah into 3 (vi. 8), Amos (v. 4), or rather Habakkuk, into the one saying: "The just shall live by his faith." But not merely the commands, but also the promises of the Old and New Covenant are comprised in this saying. Ver. 5. Now *wine* completes the sin, raising pride to a climax by besotting the drinker. The latter points at the Chaldæan, who, like the Assyrian (Nahum i. 10), is addicted to intemperance, thus aggravating his impious spirit. As to Babylonian vice, compare the riotous banquet, Dan. v. (Herod. i. 191; Xen. *Cyrop.* vii. 5. 15), and also the more general testimony of Curtius (v. 1): Babylonii maxime in vinum et quae ebrietatem sequuntur effusi sunt.—To the two proverb-like sayings respecting the toper and the braggart, is added a further characteristic of the insatiable Chaldæan, who is as greedy as all-devouring Hades, as insatiable as death.—נפשו, on Isa. v. 14.

to himself all peoples. 6. Shall not all these take up a proverb against him and a parable, riddles about him? And it shall be said: *Woe* to him that gathers much which is not his own—how long?—and loads himself with pledged goods! 7. Shall not thy creditors rise up suddenly, and thy tormentors awake, and thou shalt be for plunder to them? 8. For thou hast fleeced many nations; so shall the whole remnant of the nations fleece thee for the shedding of human blood, and the outrage to the land, to the city, and all who dwell therein. 9. *Woe* to him that extorts evil gain for his house, to set his nest on high, to escape the fist of misfortune! 10. Thou hast consulted shame to thy house in the bounds of many peoples, and hast sinned with thy soul. 11. For the stone from the wall shall cry, and the beam from

Ver. 6. The nations swallowed up by him will make the Chaldæan the object of derisive proverbs and comparisons, in which he figures as an example of fallen pride.—ויאמר, impersonal.—The first of the five woes applies to the insatiable one, to whom nothing will arise from his plunder but oppressors. *How long shall it so continue?* i.e. without an end being seen.—עבטים, pledged goods, here others' goods, seized by violence. Ver. 7. Having so much property of others in possession, the Chaldæan is in a sense the debtor of the nations; they are his creditors, and they will dun him.—נשך, used frequently of usury, and suitable in its double meaning in such a witticism. Ver. 9. The second woe applies to the folly of the greedy plunderer, who hoped to strengthen his house, but actually devoted it to destruction. To *build the nest high* (cf. Obad. 4), signifies here to render his internal and military power invincible, especially by corresponding buildings, in which the Babylonians were rich. —This meaning is quite satisfying, and hence there is no occasion to wrest this woe from all connection, and apply it to King Jehoiakim (so Hitz., Klein.), who is no doubt similarly reproached, Jer. xxii. 13–17. Could the witticisms of the nations on the conqueror be already exhausted? Ver. 10 confirms the reference to the Chaldæan. Instead of imperishable fame, the latter has procured shame to himself by his scheme of plundering all nations. קצות, *acc. loci:* in the ends (bounds) of many nations he is reviled as a ruthless robber. קָצוֹת, as infin. Kal (?), "to root out," suits neither grammar nor fact; better קָצוֹתָ, thou hast stripped, robbed (Targ., Syr.).—וחטא, as in i. 11 at close. Ver. 11. The house of such a robber cannot stand; it dissolves.

the woodwork answer it. 12. *Woe* to him that builds a city by bloodshed, and establishes a fortress by outrage! 13. Behold, comes it not from Yahveh of hosts, that peoples labour for that which is fit for fire, and nations weary themselves for that which is good for nothing? 14. For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of Yahveh's glory, as the waters cover

There is an allusion to the different portions of the empire, which will fall asunder. Ver. 12. The third woe applies to the reckless builder of proud works in the godless capital. The clauses here are proverb-like throughout, easy of general application (cf. Jer. xxii. 13), but in keeping with ver. 6, primarily coined for the Chaldæan, as ver. 13 also confirms. Ver. 13 applies plainly to the nations subject to the Chaldæan, who are forced to labour in building his capital—in vain, as it falls a prey to fire; this the prophet sees to come from God. בדי, properly, for the need of. Jer. li. 58 in similar terms.—That Nebuchadnezzar did not undertake his greatest works in building till after the close of his wars, cannot be seriously opposed to the above exposition. Apart from the fact that the fortifying and beautifying of Babylon certainly began from the moment of his accession, Habakkuk was familiar enough with the policy of this great power to know that all its victories must be celebrated by the building of a new Babylonian tower, or by glorifying this centre of the world's life and movement. This also took place on the largest scale. So Berosus relates (in Joseph. *contra Apion*, i. 19. 7): "He himself (Nebuchadnezzar) adorned the temple of Bel and the rest from the spoils of war in the most costly style. The city, which had been from the beginning, he renewed, and added another outside. That besiegers, if they ever had the river behind them, might not be able to approach the city, he surrounded the inner city with three walls, and the outer city with three, the former of brick and asphalt, the latter of brick. After thus fortifying the city considerably, and suitably adorning the gates, he erected, alongside his father's palace, a second palace, surpassing the former in height and splendour. It would take too long to describe it. But, though it was so vast and splendid, it was finished in fifteen days." Ver. 14. These gigantic efforts of the world-power at Babylon are in vain; for another kingdom, the kingdom of Yahveh, will conquer the world. The oracle leans on Isa. xi. 9, but extends the range of the domain to the whole earth (cf. Num. xiv. 21). The substantive conception lying in לדעת is in a sense the material of the filling.

the sea. 15. *Woe* to him that makes his neighbour drink, who pourest in thy fury, and makest him drunk, that thou mayest look thy fill on their nakedness! 16. Thou art filled with shame instead of glory; drink now thou also, and make thyself bare; the cup of the right hand of Yahveh comes round to thee, and mocking smites thy glory. 17. For the outrage to Lebanon shall cover thee, and the destruction of the beasts which he scared away,—for the bloodshedding of men, and the outrage to the land, the city, and all who dwell therein. 18. What avails the graven image, that its maker forms it; the molten image, which reveals deceit, that the maker of his work trusts in it, to make dumb idols?—19. *Woe* to him that says to the wood: Awake!—Arise! to the dumb stone: shall *it* reveal? Behold, it is set in gold and

Ver. 15. The fourth woe rebukes the malignant destroyer of the nations, who pours his wrath, in a sense, into them (as intoxicating drink is often a figure of destruction; cf. Obad. 16), in order to feast on their nakedness, which they expose in their drunken state (Gen. ix. 21 f.),—the latter an image of the emptiness and dishonour of every kind which falls on conquered countries.—סִבַּח, Piel, to pour out; here, therefore, to *pour in*,—according to others, from the meaning "to add": to mix. Ver. 16. ערל, Niph. denom. from עָרְלָה; properly to show the foreskin, corresponds to the מְעוּרֵיהֶם, ver. 15.—Woe to such a malignant one, for his turn comes! The wine of wrath, offered by enemies, ver. 15, is called here, in the retribution, wine from the right hand of Yahveh. Ver. 17. *To Lebanon.* This genit. of object applies, not to the Holy Land generally, but to the forests of that hill-range, which the conqueror will wickedly lay waste to get material for his buildings in Babylon, cf. Isa. xiv. 8. The Assyrian had done the same before (Isa. xxxvii. 24).—יְחִיתַן from חתת, imperf. Hiphil for יְחַתֵּן (יָחַת), with augment to supply the place of reduplication, and pausal *an* for *en* of the suffix; cf., however, also Ges. § 20, Anm. 1.—Ver. 17*b* = v. 8*b*. But by the *land* and the *city* here the Holy Land, with its capital, is to be understood, into which the enemy penetrates across Lebanon. Ver. 18. The discourse at last fitly touches on the idol-worship of the Babylonian. To him, as an idolator, belongs also the fifth and last woe, ver. 19, to which ver. 18 is a transition. That image-worship flourished, especially in Babylon, is evident from Deutero-Isaiah, Daniel,

silver, and there is no spirit at all within it. 20. But Yahveh is in his holy temple,—let the whole earth be still before him.

III. 1. Prayer of Habakkuk the prophet in dithyramb-strain. 2. O Yahveh, I have heard thy fame, I am terrified! Yahveh, revive thy work within the years, within the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy. 3. Eloah shall come from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran!

and elsewhere.—The image is called מורה שקר, probably because connected with oracles, but in any case appealed to for guidance (תורה). That the words are to be referred to the image, not to a false prophet (König, *Offb.* ii. 148 f.), is unanswerably shown by הוא יורה, ver. 19. Ver. 20. From these worthless idols the prophet turns his gaze upward to the true God in His holy temple (Ps. xi. 4), and bids all the world in reverence desist from their foolish talk and boasting before Him, who, according to ver. 14, is to be well known to them. *Be still before Him!* announces His coming, as in Zeph. i. 7, which passage we regard as the older; see Introduction.

Chapter III.

Ver. 1. There follows again a lyrical answer to what was revealed in ch. ii., and indeed a *prayer* of the prophet, who however, according to ver. 14, speaks in the name of the Church, as in i. 12 ff. שגיון, properly wild or Bacchic song, *dithyrambus*, according to Ps. vii. (heading), a technical phrase for a species of song, according to the present heading with suitable strain for singing. For Habakkuk's prayer is thus described as a song to be sung to music, as in ver. 19 at end. Ver. 2. *Thy fame*, the fame of Thy coming, refers not so much to ch. i. as rather to what is seen in ch. ii. The parousia of the Lord as Judge over the world, especially the world-empire, draws nigh; then the seer is of necessity afraid. Nevertheless he wishes that God will call to life (Kleinert differently: make live again, namely the work of deliverance from Egypt) His glorious work בקרב ש', *i.e.* not in the course of years, at some distant time, but in the midst of the years, before their lapse, before they are gone. Thus let Thy will be done, let Thy kingdom come speedily; only let not God in the midst of wrath forget mercy to those who, far from defiance, wait for Him in truth. Ver. 3. אלוה, sing., the archaic solemn form.

(Selah.) His glory covers the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise. 4. And there shall be glory like the sunlight, rays at his side; there it is where his strength is hidden. 5. Before him goes pestilence, and fiery plague marches behind him. 6. When he appears, he makes the earth totter; when he looks forth, he makes the heathen nations start up; and the eternal mountains crumble to dust, the everlasting hills sink down: he treads ancient ways. 7. I see Cushan's tents in trouble, the curtains of the land of Midian tremble. 8. Is Yahveh enraged at the rivers; or is thy wrath against the rivers, or thy fury against the sea, that thou ridest upon thy horses, thy chariots of victory? 9. Thy bow is made quite bare: Settled by oath, weapons of

The description of God's coming recalls that of Sinai (like Deborah's song in Judg. v. and Ps. lxviii.). Therefore, also, God comes from the Sinaitic peninsula, or from *Teman* lying in front of it (Edom, see Ezek. xxv. 13), and the *mountain range of Paran* running between the Edomite range and Sinai.—סלה, also a musical expression, found regularly after strongly emphasised sayings, which are to be solemnly emphasised by the music.—On God's manifestation the heaven is all covered with His glory, the earth quite filled with the echo which His majestic proclamation finds in creation. Ver. 4. נאור, like the *sun*, Job xxxi. 26.—*Rays*, according to the standing Semitic figure regarded as horns, and therefore dual. Ver. 5. The two synonyms דבר and רשף indicate the destructive effect which such a manifestation has on the sinful creation on every side. Ver. 6. וימדד, Pil. of מוד = מוט, to totter (so LXX, Targ.), not from מדד, to measure (Klein. *et al.*).—With the *eternal* hills, cf. Micah vi. 2.—*Ancient ways*, how and where He walked in the foretime (Ps. lxviii. 24), applies to His going forth with Israel through the Red Sea to Sinai, where He displayed His glorious majesty; cf. vv. 8–10.—*Cushan* = Cush (Ethiopia), represents here the peoples lying beyond the Red Sea. Beside it stands *Midian*, the inhabitants of the Sinaitic peninsula east of the Red Sea. Ver. 7. His *tent curtains* shake, poetical specialising of the subject. Ver. 8. When the prophet sees God march forth as of old, he sees the rivers and the sea retreat. This is expressed by the genuinely lyrical question: *Is the Lord enraged against the rivers?* Ver. 9. עריה, nakedness, here instead of infin. absol. to תעיר. By the

the word! (Selah.) Thou sunderest rivers into dry land. 10. When they see thee, the mountains tremble, a flood of waters passes by. The abyss gives forth his roar, he lifts up his hands on high. 11. Sun and moon have withdrawn into their dwelling; thy arrows sweep along for a light, the flash of thy spears for brightness. 12. In anger thou treadest the earth, in wrath thou threshest the heathen nations. 13. Thou hast gone forth for thy people's salvation, for the salvation of thy anointed one; thou shatterest the head of the house of the transgressor, laying bare the foundation up to the neck. (Selah.) 14. Thou piercest with his lance the head of his princes, who advance near to scatter me: who exult as if they would devour the

horses and chariots, ver. 8, are meant the clouds as cherubim; the *bow* is not the peaceful rainbow, but that with which God shoots the lightnings (ver. 11). שבעות מטות אמת, explained very diversely. The words are intentionally enigmatical in solemn menace. *Oaths, rods of the word*, are heard from the Lord, *i.e.* He comes to execute His sworn judgments, which issue like mighty rods from His mouth, and descend like thunder-strokes. *Selah*, see on ver. 3.—*Thou dividest rivers into land*, cf. Job xxviii. 10. It recalls the march through the Red Sea, ver. 10, also the tempest at Sinai. Ver. 10. As the storm of rain pours from above, so, on the other hand, the deep flood rises up and sprinkles the heaven, lashed to fury by God's whirlwinds; cf. Ex. xiv. 21 f. Ver. 11. *Sun and moon* are darkened, retreat in fear, so to speak, into their dwelling (cf. Joel iv. 15), so that the scene is awfully illuminated only by lightning-flashes, which are called God's arrows or spear-points.—לאור, not "in the light," etc., but to give light. Ver. 13. *Thy anointed one* (accus. dependent on the substantive idea lying in ישע), not of Jehoiakim, who was little worthy of deliverance, but was rather to be carried away by the judgment (Jer. xxii. 18 f.), nor yet the nation (so a reading of the LXX, *τοὺς χριστούς σου*, Ew., Hitz., Kleinert), but the God-chosen king who, according to Isaiah, Micah, and other prophecies, will survive. In opposition to this kingdom the world-empire, especially the Chaldæan, is *the house of the godless one*. According to the plastic expression, which plainly alludes to Ps. cx. 6, its head is shattered, and the whole body laid bare from the ground up to the neck, so that it stands a naked ruin. Ver. 14. במטיו, applies here to spears. With His

defenceless in secret. — 15. Thou treadest the sea, thy horses, the heap of mighty waters.

16. I heard, then my heart trembled, my lips quiver aloud; rottenness penetrates my bones, and where I stand, I tremble, because I shall abide in peace to the day of tribulation, until he draws near to the nation who invades it. 17. For the fig-tree will not bud, and there is no fruit in the vines; the produce of the olive tree fails, and the cornfields yield no meat; the flock goes forth from the fold, and there are no oxen in the stalls. 18. But I will exult in

own weapons God causes the *head of his princes* (פרזים after פרזון, Judg. v. 7) *to be pierced through*,—his, namely the רשע. ראש means the enemy's ruler. They proudly exult as if about *to devour the defenceless* in the ravenous beast's *lair*, where no one can snatch away his prey. Ver. 15 describes in a stroke the majesty of the divine army-leader, to whom feeble men must perforce give way. On the other hand, we must not understand by the sea the hostile army (Hitz.). Ver. 16. At the beginning of the final strophe the prophet again casts a glance back in שמעתי, as in ver. 2. His lips audibly (לקול) quiver with fear; his bones are without strength; he feels as if he had no power in his joints, no ground under his feet, where he can remain quiet until the horrible thing happens by which his unsuspecting people is smitten. This passage also shows that outwardly the Chaldæan judgment is still far off. Ver. 17. The devastation of his fatherland is imminent, and he feels it deeply. Ver. 18. But all this outward evil, which is imminent, cannot move him. Although his natural man is heavily smitten by his people's suffering, he yet lifts up his head with joy, because he knows that the Lord, who does this, has in reality gracious thoughts about this land and people. Hence his holy joy, his lofty pleasure, his loud praise. *To walk* on the *high places* of the earth is properly God's way, Micah i. 3. Here He makes man so cheerful and glad, that he moves lightly over the high places of the earth without being disturbed by their steeps and dark depths.— למנצח בנ', another musical direction. מנצח (see Del. on Ps. iv., heading) denotes the director of the temple music. By ל (elsewhere prefixed to the psalms), therefore, the psalm is marked out as designed for public liturgical use. בנגינות, with accompaniment of strings, is found also in Ps. iv. But peculiar here is the suff., according to which the prophet as a

Yahveh, rejoice in the God of my salvation. 19. Yahveh, the Lord, is my strength, and he makes my feet like the hinds, and he makes me walk on my high places.

To the chief singer on my stringed instrument.

Exposition.

Contents of Habakkuk's Writing. The Coming of the Lord. 1. The Judgment on Judah, ch. i.: *a*. Complaint of the Wrong in the Land, i. 2–4; *b*. The Lord's Answer: I bring up the Chaldæans, i. 5–11; *c*. Complaint of this ruthless Destroyer, i. 12–17; the Lord's Answer: the Judgment on this violent Transgressor in a fivefold Woe, ii. 2–20. 3. Prophetic Hymn to the Lord, who appears for Judgment and Salvation, ch. iii.

In such brief compass the book presents (*a*) a vivid picture of God's future dealings with His people, before whom lies the purging fire of grievous suffering through that victorious host, who, however, will not succumb to it, but will emerge as God's perfect and purified kingdom; and (*b*) a deeply spiritual view of God's attitude to man. In the foreground stands, first (i. 2–4), the night-piece which the present time forms to the enlightened gaze of the prophet, who is forced, like Jeremiah, to complain of his own people, and especially of its unprincipled rulers. This forms the introduction and inner justification for the fateful oracle, which announces (i. 5 ff.) the unexpected, nearly impending, visitation through the Chaldæans, whose fierce hosts with ease overturn one nation after another in rapid, bold marches, plunder one country after another, and will not even spare Judah. Not without hearty sympathy for the conquered in their ill-usage, the prophet, whose sense of justice is now offended from the

Levite (see Introd.) seems to have directly bound himself to play, which in this case perhaps also included the lead of the rendering.

opposite side, complains of the conqueror's violent deeds, vv. 12–17. Is this defiant power to triumph without end, plunge all nations into ruin, and swallow up even Yahveh's people? Is not the bearing of this avenger of an offended God itself a grievous offence to His majesty, as the arrogant heathen nation deifies itself, its material resources (vv. 11, 15)? The seer has already (ver. 11) regarded the unparalleled success of the victor with an expression of moral suspicion. And in ver. 12, in the name of the faithful Church, he affirms his faith in the God, whose faithfulness is of old, and who will never give up His own to destruction, but can only subject them to temporary chastisement by means of foreign rulers. *Quousque tandem?* he exclaims to this Church (i. 17), and also to (i. 2 ff.) the transgressors among his own people.

Faith in God's righteous government, and fidelity to His promise, has no doubt that the Lord will check this great robber as He does small ones. But no positive assurance respecting the future has yet been given the prophet by such feelings and convictions, as ii. 1 instructively shows: he has first to look round for a divine revelation, which will bring to an end the trial of his faith. The oracle, now to be imparted to him, is announced as of the highest importance by the direction in ii. 2, which provides for its being made known to every one, and at the same time perpetuated. But instead of the expected disclosure respecting the fate of the Chaldæan, there follows, in ver. 4, a surprising and deeply significant hint of the inner attitude of soul to God which is decisive of man's worth and destiny: Inflated conceit and insincerity go together on the one side, uprightness and confidence on the other. The former is the inner nature of heathenism, which prides itself on being equal to God Himself. Only by robbery perpetrated on God's glory, which is also self-deception (cf. ii. 5 and i. 13), can man climb to this dizzy height of self-consciousness. On the other hand, an honest and true disposition towards God shows itself in confidence in Him.

Whoever has this trustful fidelity will abide in life, and therefore not perish in the judgment, however fearful this may be. If, consequently, this believing confidence in the Lord and His word is the means of preserving life, it is the decisive element in the righteousness which is the condition of God's goodwill; cf. Gen. xv. 6, and the numerous passages where Isaiah also has commended believing trust as the condition of safety in the judgment, especially Isa. vii. 9, xxviii. 16, xxx. 15. But, along with Gen. xv. 6, Habakkuk has given most definite and pregnant expression to the truth which attained such central importance in the N. T., and especially in Pauline teaching. On the N. T. use of the passage see Orelli, *O. T. Prophecy*, p. 326.

With this exposure of his inmost mind the wicked foe is really already condemned, his fate already settled. But ii. 5 turns back to him, and in what follows his lot is indirectly announced in the form of a fivefold woe, which is put into the lips of the peoples oppressed by him. In the Chaldæans they will hereafter have at hand a standing example, by way of terror, when it is necessary to threaten the insatiable usurer (ver. 6 f.), or the grasping marauder (ver. 9 f.), or the insolent founder of cities (ver. 12 ff.), or the traitor who mixes the poison of his cunning and hate for others (ver. 15 ff.), or the silly idolator (ver. 18 f.) with his fate. But this instructive example of divine retribution is also followed up by the revelation of the divine kingdom which takes the place of the Babylonian empire (ii. 14). From His heavenly dwelling-place the Lord Himself is about to claim the whole earth as His possession (ii. 20).

If in the lyrical conclusion, ch. iii., which is the echo of the revelations just received, especially of those received in ch. ii., the prophet's sentiment primarily finds expression (in the most thoroughly subjective manner in ver. 2, and at the close, vv. 16–19), where he no doubt again speaks in the name of the true Church (cf. ver. 14), on the other hand the prayer

expands into prophetic discourse. While the heart loses itself in contemplating the coming of God for judgment and redemption, there rises before the vision a glorious picture, which borrows its main lines from the exodus from Egypt and the manifestation at Sinai—that fundamental revelation of Yahveh. The whole world will behold the glory of the Lord, when He shall lay on earth the foundation of His new and perfect kingdom by overthrowing the earthly power, and by redeeming and elevating His people with its God-chosen King. Thus the suppliant has again insensibly passed into the seer.

ZEPHANIAH.

Introduction.

Ch. i. 1 traces the pedigree of Zephaniah (צפניה, he whom Yahveh hides; LXX: Σοφονίας; Vulg.: Sophonia) in an ascending line to the fourth generation: his fathers are Cushi, Gedaliah, Amariah, Hezekiah. As circumstantial genealogical lists are not usual in the headings of the prophetical books, and the pedigree stops at Hezekiah, as if the latter were well known, some think that the famous king of this name is meant, and that Zephaniah was therefore of royal blood. So, in the train of Ibn Ezra, think Hitzig, Bleek, Keil, Kleinert, *et al.;* whereas Carpzov, Jahn, De Wette, Delitzsch, *et al.*, declare against this view. The possibility of this view cannot indeed be directly questioned, either on chronological or other grounds; yet it is little probable, as we should expect a more specific predicate (מלך יהודה) with the common name Hezekiah.

No particulars are known of the personality of the prophet. That he lived in the time of Josiah is also stated in the heading, which is certainly to be trusted in this point also; the only open question is, to what period in the thirty-one years' reign of this king (640–609 B.C.) Zephaniah's work belongs,—whether earlier or later than that eighteenth year of the same, when the carrying out of the religious reformation began in accordance with the newly found law, 2 Kings xxii. 3 ff. Delitzsch and Kleinert place it afterwards, appealing to i. 4, where only a remnant of Baal is spoken of (but see on the passage); but the prophet's judgment on Jerusalem,

with its various parties of Yahveh and Baal, or Moloch, or star worshippers (i. 4 ff.), its unprincipled priests and arrogant prophets (iii. 4), its plundering authorities (i. 8, iii. 3), and its entire body of inhabitants who listen to no voice of truth and accept no correction (iii. 1 f., 7),—is altogether too unfavourable, and presupposes too much positive heathenism, to allow us to think that that honestly meant and, at least outwardly, thorough cleansing of the places and forms of worship by the pious king could have taken place in the last period. It would be better to fix on the middle period, between the twelfth and eighteenth year of Josiah (so Hitzig, *et al.*), as according to 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3 he already made in the twelfth year a beginning of such attempts, but cannot then have carried them out with his later energy and consistency. But the picture given of the miserable state of things agrees best with the first years of this reign, when the king, who had come to the throne in his eighth year, had not yet sufficient independence to be able to resist the corruption. The severe language of the prophet may have helped to stir up the king's conscience. But it is strange that in the inquiry, related of the eighteenth year (2 Kings xxii. 12 ff.), Josiah does not send to Zephaniah,— who, after his discourses, would have been the most suitable for the purpose,—but to the prophetess Huldah. Or was Zephaniah then already dead?

As relates to the contents of the book, the threatening of severe judgment follows on the exposition of the above-mentioned disorders in his own land. But from the first the judgment is contemplated in unwonted universality (cf. ii. 2 f., iii. 8, and elsewhere). It approaches the heathen neighbours, the Philistines (ii. 4 ff.), Moab and Ammon (ii. 8 ff.); it reaches the distant Ethiopians in the south (ii. 2), as well as the Assyrians, with their ever-extending dominion; their capital, Nineveh, still stands, but will now soon perish (ii. 13 ff.). Moreover, sinful Judah-Jerusalem cannot

this time be spared. Devastation and destruction, dispersion and captivity await it (i. 4 ff., iii. 7, *et al.*). But afterwards Yahveh will gather His people and bring them back from banishment, so far as they have become humble, that they may dwell in peace around their King, Yahveh, in their own land. Moreover, the heathen world, humbled by terrible wholesale judgments (iii. 8), and astonished at the blessings bestowed on His people, will do Him homage, so that His name will be adored through the whole earth, and tokens of submission will be brought to His temple from every quarter (ii. 11, iii. 9 f.).

The comprehensive character of Zephaniah's threatening prophecies has been brought into connection with the fact, that about the time of his appearance the Scythians (from about 632 B.C.) had broken up from their northern seats and invaded Media, and also appeared in Asia Minor, and at last penetrated as far as Egypt (Herod. i. 103 ff.). These northern barbarians, who grazed the borders of Palestine, made a deep impression on the Israelites; see Orelli's *Comm. on Jeremiah*, p. 17. It is possible that the national movements then beginning had a stimulating influence on Zephaniah. The desolating of Philistia by these hordes is to be regarded as happening after his oracle (ii. 4 f.). It formed a speedy fulfilment of the oracle, serving to prove that in him men had to do with a genuine prophet of Yahveh.

If, as now stated, the import of this often undervalued book is theologically important, the form, perhaps, is less original and attractive than, *e.g.*, in Nahum and Habakkuk. The stream of discourse flows along smoothly, yet gravely; repetitions of phrases increase the emphasis. The broader style and the phraseology often remind of his younger contemporary Jeremiah. Like the latter, Zephaniah often uses oracles of predecessors.

Monographs: F. A. Strauss, *Vaticinia Zeph. comm. illustr.* 1843; L. Reinke (Cath.), *Der Prophet Zephanja*, 1868.

THE GENERAL JUDGMENT COMES ON JERUSALEM, CH. I.

I. 1. The word of Yahveh, which came to Zephaniah, the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah, king of Judah.

2. I will carry away, sweep away everything on the face of the earth, is Yahveh's oracle. 3. I will carry away man and beast, carry away the birds of the heaven and the fish of the sea, and the ruins along with the evil-doers, and root out men from the face of the earth, is the oracle of Yahveh. 4. And I stretch out my hand against Judah, and against all dwellers in Jerusalem; and will root out from this place the remnant of Baal, the name of the idol-priests, with the priests; 5. and them that pray on the roofs to the army of heaven, as well as them that

CHAPTER I.

Ver. 1. Heading just as in Micah i. 1. See Introd. respecting Zephaniah's descent and times. Ver. 2. The absol. infin. of אָסֹף is added, as in Jer. viii. 13, by way of emphasis to the imperf Hiphil of סוּף, which is certainly akin in meaning and derivation.—*Everything* from the face of the *earth* indicates at once the universal vision of the seer. This כל is expanded in ver. 3. Ver. 3. *Man* stands first as the real sinner. — המכשלות, not synonym of מִכְשׁוֹל, *σκάνδαλον*, so that it would apply to the idols, but after Isa. iii. 6: tottering ruins. All dwelling-places are but ruins, which easily tumble down and bury the unrighteous inmates. The last clause repeats emphatically, that sentence of destruction is passed on mankind. Ver. 4. This judgment is turned also against the nation and the city standing in the foreground at present. The *remnant of Baal* may be taken as meaning, that Baal-worship had been already limited in Judah-Jerusalem in comparison with former days (certainly not rooted out); but the parallel: "even *the name* of the idol-priests" (in the sense of Hos. x. 5), favours rather an emphatic sense, as in Amos i. 8, ix. 12: up to the last remnant.—The *priests* (כהנים, in contrast with the others, the usual name for the ministers of Yahveh) are combined in one sentence of condemnation with the ministers of foreign cults (כמרים in Hos. x. 5, and cf. 2 Kings xxiii. 5); so little better are they than the others. Ver. 5 con-

pray to* Yahveh* of* hosts*; them that swear to Yahveh, as well as them that swear by their Melech; 6. and them that have turned aside from following Yahveh, as well as them that never sought Yahveh, nor asked after him. 7. Be still before the Lord Yahveh! For near is the day of Yahveh. For Yahveh has prepared a battle-feast, has hallowed his invited ones.—8. And it shall come to pass, on Yahveh's sacrifice-day, that I will punish the princes and the king's

templates the community as a *massa perdita*. Thereto belong those who busy themselves with the semblance of Yahveh-worship, as well as those who have openly given themselves up to crass heathenism. This is expressed in three antitheses, of which the first and second are certainly now strangely mixed up. As the arrangement in Zephaniah elsewhere is so clear, I conjecture that one or several words have dropped out. Thus (1) star-worshippers (cf. Jer. xix. 13) and Yahveh-worshippers; read: והמשחוים ליהוה צבאות. Very instructive here is the passage 2 Kings xxiii. 5 along with 2 Kings xxi. 3. (2) They who swear by Yahveh and they who swear by Moloch. They swear by the god whom they most regarded; the swearing was therefore a confessing to a god, hence the first time with לְ. מַלְכָּם, name of the god, as in Jer. xlix. 1, 3, where certainly the appellative meaning might determine the form. Ver. 6. There follows still (3) an antithesis embracing the entire population of Jerusalem: apostate believers and unbelievers. The Yahveh-worshippers (ver. 5) are also נסוגים, inwardly, morally apostates, traitors, which explains their rejection. In contrast with them are those who always stood altogether aloof from Yahveh. בקשׁוּ, with ק *raphatum*, should be read. See Baer-Del., Ausg. p. 79. Ver. 7. Be still! Reverential, trembling silence becomes the dwellers on earth, for the Judge of worlds will soon come; cf. Hab. ii. 20.—*Near is the day of Yahveh;* cf. Joel i. 15, and on Obad. 15.—Yahveh has appointed a slaughter: the sacrifice is the Jewish nation. The invited guests, whom He has invited thereto and "hallowed," *i.e.* suitably prepared for the sacrificial feast, are the wild foreign warriors, who will fall on the sacrifice. Cf. the kindred passage, Isa. xiii. 3. Ver. 8. The בני המלך are not specifically the sons of the king at present reigning, Jehoiakim and Jehoahaz; the sons of Josiah were at this time perhaps very young, even if they were born. Del. sees in the mention of them a sign of the later date of the oracle.—The wearing of foreign attire, such as was common about this time

sons, and all who clothe themselves in foreign attire. 9. And I will punish all who leap over the threshold, on that day; who fill the house of their masters with violence and deceit. 10. There shall be on that day, is Yahveh's oracle, loud crying from the fishgate and howling from the new city, and great crashing from the hills. 11. Lament, ye inhabitants of the mortar, for all the inhabitants of Canaan are destroyed,

among the rich, showed a heart alienated from the nation and its God. Ver. 9. Comparison with 1 Sam. v. 5, according to which leaping over the threshold was a practice in the Dagon temple at Ashdod (a custom occurring elsewhere, as the sacred threshold was not to be trodden on), would lead to worshippers in foreign lands mimicking such superstitious heathen conduct in the temples of their idols (in the "house of their masters"), which they, moreover, enriched by deceit and violence. But the latter phrase makes it probable that here servants are added to the masters, ver. 8, and that *leaping over the threshold* was a proverbial phrase for breaking into others' houses, attacking others' property. Rightly Calvin, Ewald, Keil, *et al.* But אדניהם is not to be taken as singular; at least not to be referred to the king (Josiah?). Ver. 10. Here is heard already the cry of despairing anguish from the beleaguered, almost vanquished city. The howling on one side of the city is answered by the shriek on the other; as was actually the case, in a heartrending way, at the capture of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple by Titus. The *fishgate* (leading northward) belonged to the *new city* (המשנה, properly second city, עִיר הַמִּשְׁנֶה), which extended northward from ancient Jerusalem, partly westward from the temple-site. In hostile invasions this was first and most severely threatened, as the "second" wall (of Hezekiah), surrounding it, was not so strong as the innermost one, and, moreover, on the north-west a hill-range commanded this quarter. According to 2 Kings xxii. 14, the prophetess Huldah dwelt in this new city in the days of Josiah.—זעקת שבר = שבר, Isa. xv. 5, noise of destruction from the hills, the higher parts of the city, temple-hill, etc., where the walls likewise give way before the instruments of destruction. Ver. 11. The *mortar* is here, perhaps, a portion of this outer city, namely the hollow formed by the upper course of the tyropœon. The name of this vessel "stamping" may allude to the buzz of this industrial quarter. See on the topography, Mühlau, *Handwörterb.* pp. 685, 688.—The *people of the Canaanites* is the trading class (according to well-known

all who load themselves with silver rooted out. 12. And it shall come to pass that I search Jerusalem with lanterns, and punish the people who are settled on their lees, who say in their heart: "Yahveh does neither good nor evil." 13. And their possessions are a prey, and their houses a desolation: and they build houses, and inhabit them not; plant vineyards, and never drink their wine. 14. Near is the great day of Yahveh, near and very swift. Hark, the day of Yahveh—the mighty man cries bitterly. 15. A day of displeasure is that day, a day of distress and anguish, a day of barrenness and desolation, a day of gloominess and darkness, a day of clouds and mistiness; 16. a day of the trumpet and trumpet-call upon the fenced cities and upon the high turrets. 17. And I will bring distress on men, that they

phraseology), certainly, for the most part, of Jewish blood. The designation is carefully chosen in order to indicate the spirit of the people, on whom the judgment does not come by chance (cf. Hos. xii. 8); so also the periphrasis the "laden with silver," who carried this metal about in great quantities, in order to make interest with it or to carry home their gains. Ver. 12. With *lanterns*, such as watchmen carry in seeking suspected persons; *i.e.* so exactly that none will escape whom God means to punish.—*Who are settled*, are congealed, like wine on its lees not drawn out (cf. Jer. xlviii. 11). The petty-minded people of Jerusalem, insensible to everything divine, are here inimitably sketched: seated on their money, and refusing to be shaken out of their ruts; while they do not deny Yahveh, they credit Him neither with good nor evil. Ver. 13. They must be separated from their beloved mammon; cf. on Amos v. 11. Ver. 14. מָהֵר not partic. for מְמַהֵר; but the originally verbal and then adverbial word has acquired adjectival force. Already the thunder of the judgment-day is heard, when the mighty man cries bitterly for pain and grief. Ver. 15 f. The cumulative description is meant to depict the horrible gloom and distress of that day. The root-passage, Joel ii. 2 (cf. Amos v. 20), is here surpassed.—שאה ומשואה, united as in Job xxxviii. 27, xxx. 3. Ver. 17. וְהֵצֵרֹתִי, *milra*, to be read according to Baer-Del. p. 79. ולחֻמָם (מ *raph.*, Baer-Del.), their flesh, in contrast with flowing blood. Fleischer has shown the primary meaning of the stem לחם to be: to be firm; hence the noun לֶחֶם, firm food, in contrast with milk,

shall go like the blind, because they sinned against Yahveh; and their blood is poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. 18. Nor is their silver and their gold able to save them in the day of the displeasure of Yahveh, and in the fire of his zeal the whole earth is consumed; for an end, a sudden end he makes of all the inhabitants of the earth.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. i. The General Judgment comes on Jerusalem. *a.* Introduction: The General Judgment, ver. 2 f.; *b.* Judgment on the Parties and Classes of Judah, vv. 4–9; *c.* Fate of Jerusalem, vv. 10–13; *d.* The Day of the Lord, vv. 14–18.

The general judgment, standing menacingly in Zephaniah in the foreground, is quite universal, as announced at once at the beginning (ver. 2 f.). The whole world can continue no longer, when the holy God draws near to reckon with it. The close of the chapter (vv. 14–18) also depicts, with plain allusion to Joel, this day of retribution as one coming on all the children of men (ver. 17). But the real aim of this first oracle is directed to Jerusalem, which is threatened in the middle of the oracle. There, indeed, by the side of adherents of Baal, Moloch, etc., there are to be found also worshippers of Yahveh; and these parties seem at the time to be pretty plainly contrasted with each other. But Zephaniah, Yahveh's representative, can scarcely distinguish between them, so little are the spirit and walk of Yahveh's worshippers in harmony with their creed and worship. On the contrary, in their

Hebrew: bread; Arabic, on the other hand: flesh; so here the form לְחוּם. Ver. 18. אַךְ, nothing but, not to be confounded with אַף. נִבְהָלָה, partic. Niph., with force of noun: terrible destruction; synonymously בֶּהָלָה, which also gains the meaning of terror from this sense; cf. Isa. lxv. 23.—On the construction with אֶת, cf. Comm. on Jer. v. 18.

godless hearts and wicked life they are nearly akin to the partisans of the heathen gods, and are placed with these under one sentence of condemnation, as the true God is not to be bribed by the credo of the lips and outward zeal for His cause, when holy obedience to His word is altogether wanting. In the same way, according to ver. 9, the servants at Jerusalem are no better than their masters, who deck themselves in foreign plumes. Therefore the whole of Jerusalem is given over to the judgment.

Humble yourselves before the great Judgment, Ch. II.

Ver. 1. Crowd together and crouch down, thou nation that cannot be ashamed! 2. Before yet the decree brings forth—the time flies past like chaff—before yet the fiery wrath of Yahveh comes upon you, before yet the day of Yahveh's wrath comes upon you. 3. Seek Yahveh, all ye meek of

Chapter II.

Ver. 1. קִשּׁשׁ, Kal and Hithpoel combined, as in Isa. xxix. 9; Hab. i. 5. The Poel signifies elsewhere as denom. of קַשׁ, to gather stubble; hence here the versions, to gather themselves. Yet it is not to be understood merely of inward "collecting," but more strongly, to crowd together, stoop together. Instead of stretching forth the neck and holding the head high, let them crouch down, as the mighty judgment that descends on all would otherwise infallibly smite them. Thou *people* of insolence in the whole earth, for not merely Judah is meant. That כסף, Niph., has the meaning "to be ashamed," is clear from Talmudic usage. On the other hand, it is a question what the root of the meaning is, whether the notion of growing pale or being cut off, etc. Ver. 2. חק, *statutum*, the divine will already settled (here concerning the sinners), which has only yet *to bring forth*, i.e. to make manifest its realisation. Ver. 3. Only the humble, the *meek*, are exhorted, because nothing can be done with the rest. The former are to strive after Yahveh's favour. They are such as have in general kept His commands. But even they must still strive after complete righteousness in God's sight, and especially meekness. Such people are assumed to exist not merely in Judah; there may also be

the earth, who have kept his commandment; seek after righteousness, seek after meekness!—perhaps you will be hidden in the day of Yahveh's wrath.—4. For Gaza shall be forgotten, and Ashkelon a desolation; Ashdod — at clear noonday they will drive it out, and Ekron shall be ploughed up. 5. Woe (to you), inhabitants of the region by the sea, nation of the Cretes! The word of Yahveh (goes forth) against you, Canaan, land of the Philistines, and I cause you to perish without inhabitant. 6. And the region by the sea shall be pastures with shepherd's plains and sheepfolds. 7. And it is a possession for the remnant of the house of Judah, that they may feed thereon. In the dwellings of Ashkelon they shall lie down at evening, when Yahveh, their God, shall visit them, and he brings back their captivity.

heathen, who have followed the divine ordinances known to them (cf. Isa. xxiv. 5; Rom. ii. 14 f.), and humbly seek to draw nearer to Him. The glance then falls first on the heathen neighbours, who are smitten by the judgment. Ver. 4. Word-plays in עזה ע' and תעקר עקרון, literally Ekron will be rooted out. — Four Philistine towns are mentioned, as in Amos i. 6–8. Ver. 5. The Philistines are called, after the geographical position of their country, inhabitants of the *region by the sea* (הבל, properly line, piece of land measured off), according to their descent, *people of the Cretans*, as one section of their population, at least, had emigrated from Crete (= Caphtor, Amos ix. 7). *Canaan*, their land is called, not merely because it lies at one end of Canaan, but because this name, "lowland," originally belonged to the flat coast-land, especially the Phœnician, but also, as it seems, to the Philistine. מאין יושב—, see Comm. on Isa. v. 9. Ver. 6. נות, taken by the Massoretes as stat. constr., would be properly pastures of shepherd's plains (according to others, shepherd's cisterns, cf. Gesen. *Handwörterb.* 10 ed.); the latter כרת, instead of the usual כרים from כֶּר, for the sake of the rhythm, perhaps also with allusion to the כרתים, ver. 5. The Philistine land, abounding in towns and also in vegetation, is to become a land of shepherds, and, moreover, according to ver. 7, to fall to the Judæans. Ver. 7. עליהם, on those plains.—Elsewhere the Hiphil of רבץ stands in the case of shepherds.—שבותם ושב in Hos. vi. 11. The Keri, שְׁבִית, gives a form certainly often interchanging with the former. *Judah* is expressly spoken of,

8. I have heard Moab's reproach and the Ammonites' revilings, who reproached my people, and talked proudly against their territory. 9. Therefore, as I live, is the oracle of Yahveh of hosts, the God of Israel: Verily, Moab shall be made like Sodom, and the Ammonites like Gomorrah—a nest of nettles, and a salt-pit and desolation for ever. The remnant of my congregation shall spoil them, and what is left of my people inherit them. 10. This happens to them for their pride in reproaching and talking proudly against the people of the Lord of hosts.

11. Yahveh is terrible to them, for he makes all the gods of the earth vanish, and they shall worship him, every one

not merely Israel, which had been already carried away. Consequently, the worst judgment still impends over Judah, which, however, is followed by deliverance. Ver. 8. This שמעתי recalls Isa. xvi. 8; cf. Jer. xlviii. 29. See the accusations against *Moab*, and cf. on *Ammon*, Jer. xlix. 1–6. By the destruction of the Ephraimite kingdom, to which Moab had been tributary, and the decline of the Judæan monarchy, the insolent pride of these eastern neighbours was raised to the highest pitch, and they *uttered great things against the territory* of the people of Yahveh, as if it were property without an owner. The reference is not merely to arrogant language, but to attacks on that territory, of which, after every calamity of the Israelites, they tried to get a piece for themselves. Ver. 9. The solemn introduction of Yahveh with His full title, which affirms His covenant with Israel, is a counterstroke to the blasphemous behaviour which dishonours God in His people, cf. ver. 10. It will fare with their territory as with the cities which were overthrown in the days of their ancestor Lot, and which have lain waste ever since: a place of nettles and *salt* (cf. Jer. xvii. 6), like the district on the Dead Sea, which embodies the very idea of desolation. Cf. also the symbolic custom, Judg. ix. 45, which shows how closely the idea of barrenness is connected with salt.—The *remnant* of the people of Yahveh, it is also here emphasised, shall inherit the heathen; in its present state, it must first fall a prey to the judgment. גּוֹי, a rare mode of writing גּוֹיִי. Ver. 10. *This* comes in place of their pride hitherto, *i.e.* this lot of shame and disgrace. Ver. 11. *One who makes himself terrible is Yahveh against them*, *i.e.* He compels them to acknowledge Him as a God to be served with high reverence, by making . . . *all the islands* in

from his place, all the islands of the heathen. 12. You also, O Cushites,—the slain of my sword are they! 13. And he will shake his hand against the north, and cause Asshur to perish, and make Nineveh a desert, a dry land like the steppe. 14. And herds shall lie down in her circuit, every wild beast in swarms; pelican and hedgehog shall lodge under her capitals. Hark, the whistling in the window-space! Desolation on the threshold, for the cedar panelling is torn off.

the interminable west to vanish, see Comm. on Isa. xl. 15; their inhabitants shall worship Him, every one from his place, *i.e.* every one in the place where he lives, so that Yahveh's worship becomes universal. The pregnant explanation of Kleinert, Keil, *et al.*, as if it were said: Every one shall go from his place (to Jerusalem) in order to worship (there), artificially imports something which it is thought must have been said. Cf. also again נורא י״י אליהם. The worship in all places does not exclude special acts of homage at the central sanctuary, such as are presupposed in ch. iii. 10. Ver. 12. *Cushites* stand as representing the remotest south, as in Ezek. xxxviii. 5; see on Isa. xviii. 1. The second person is given up, because the slain are no longer to be addressed. Ver. 13. After the *minores gentes* have been disposed of, the Lord prepares for a blow against the chief power of the world in the north: *Asshur*, with its capital Nineveh, lying at the time proudly and grandly on the banks of fertilising streams; Nineveh shall be left dry and comfortless. Ver. 14. The *herds* (עדרים), more fully explained by the following clause as wild beasts of the desert. *Every wild beast* (חיתו, stat. constr., with archaic ending, as in Gen. i. 24) *of a nation*, applies not to wild tribes like the Scythians, but to the wild beast which is a nation (cf. Joel i. 6; Prov. xxx. 25 f.), dwelling in hordes in such desert places. *Pelican* (read קָאַת, according to Baer-Del.) and *hedgehog* stand together as in Isa. xxxiv. 11. *The capitals* are to be thought of as lying on the ground, so that even the hedgehog (according to others, קפוד would be the bittern?) can choose its hiding-place among the desecrated ornaments. The seer has such a mass of ruins in view as Baalbec presents to-day: the giant capitals, which encircled the buildings, lie like broken corn stalks; on the other hand, the walls still stand in ruin, with desolate threshold and window, through which the wind whistles.—The Pilel שׁוֹרֵר, intensified Kal of שִׁיר, to sing. There may also be an allusion to the moaning of the owls, etc., which nest

15. This is the city, the reveller, which dwelt in security, which said in her heart: I am, and none else! How is she become a desolation, a camping-place for wild beasts, that every one who passes by her hisses, shakes his hand!

Exposition.

Contents of ch. ii. Humble yourselves, for judgment comes on all the world: *a.* Exhortation to Humility, vv. 1–3; *b.* Judgment on the land of the Philistines, vv. 4–7; *c.* on Moab-Ammon, vv. 8–11; *d.* on Cush, ver. 12; *e.* on Asshur-Nineveh, vv. 13–15.

The only means of escaping the judgment already threatened, and shortly happening, consists, according to Zephaniah's warning, in meek self-abasement and submission to the holy majesty of God. As Isaiah and Habbakuk especially emphasise faith, believing confidence in God's gracious help, as the condition of safety, so Zephaniah emphasises the humility which has a natural inward connection with the sincere devotion of faith, the humility which feels its own demerit in God's sight, and, therefore, is inseparable from

there.—ארזה, cedar-work, here only. ערה, Piel, to strip, with impersonal subj. (not *God*, Kleinert). Observe the picturesque cadence, representing the cracking of the wainscoting as it broke off. Ewald, Hitz., take ארזה verbally as synonym of ערה; in this case עֲרָזָה, Hiphil of רָזָה, is to be read (with א for ה). Ewald renders boldly: owls (= קול ?) will sing in the window, crow (עֹרֵב = חרב ?) on the threshold: "cut up, smashed up!" Ver. 15 contains a sort of קִינָה or מָשָׁל, a lament or rather satire, such as was sung of the vanquished. What the birds sing in the ruins is this: This, then, is the city revelling in its sense of strength (cf. adj. עליז, iii. 11), thinking itself so safe behind its ramparts of rivers, and so incomparable in its greatness. *I am, and none else*, see Comm. on Isa. xlvii. 8, where it is put in the mouth of Babylon.—The *sighing*, or hissing, in sign of horror, as in Jer. xviii. 6, similarly *hand-shaking*; cf. Nah. iii. 19, hand-clapping. Rejoicing over misfortune is also included therein.

repentance. The best of men need such humility if they are to escape judgment; nay, the most humble possess it not in sufficient measure (ver. 3). It alone is of service both to the self-righteous Jews and the proud heathen, whose kingdoms are specially referred to in what follows, and indeed, first, the neighbouring peoples, whose punishment is at the door, and whose possessions, moreover, are to fall to contrite Israel (vv. 7, 9). Among them, the Philistines are specially noticed for the reason given in the Introduction, p. 261; then Ammon and Moab, as the eastern neighbours, whose pride went beyond all limits. Ver. 11 is here of great importance; according to it, Yahveh, after bringing all the gods into discredit by His judgment, will be worshipped to the ends of the earth, so that He will be adored everywhere (see on passage). This is a great declaration, going beyond the prospect of a pilgrimage of nations to Jerusalem (*e.g.* Isa. ii. 2 ff.; Micah iv. 1 ff.): Yahveh will be found of His worshippers everywhere on earth. This view is so little in contradiction with the other one, where Zion appears as the centre of Yahveh-worship, even for the heathen, that Zephaniah himself also has that other view, iii. 10; as already Isaiah, alongside ii. 2 ff., also knows of an altar of Yahveh in Egypt, xix. 19. The worshippers of Yahveh in the heathen world are, therefore, like the Jews in exile, to be regarded as having their faces turned to Jerusalem. The strongest O. T. statement, in the line of this oracle, comes later in Mal. i. 11. But the completion of the great idea that the whole earth is designed to serve as a place of prayer to the true God, and that the fulfilment of this design depends on the spirit of the worshipper, not on the place, we learn first in John iv. 21–24, from the lips of Him who has also insisted in significant terms that salvation is of the Jews (ver. 22), thus acknowledging the central mission of the Jewish nation in conveying salvation to the whole world.

After the positive fruit of the judgment on the heathen has

been indicated here in a significant way, the awful survey proceeds and concludes, after passing mention of the Cushites as the southern nation, with a severe threat against Assyria and its capital Nineveh, which still forms the centre of the heathen world. As to the fulfilment of this fateful oracle, see what is said on p. 237, after Nahum.

Jerusalem Purified and made God's City; the World made God's Kingdom, Ch. iii.

III. 1. Woe to the rebellious and polluted, the violent city! 2. She listened to no voice, accepted no correction, trusted not in Yahveh, drew not near to her God. 3. Her princes within her are roaring lions, her judges evening wolves, who leave nothing till morning. 4. Her prophets are windbags,

Chapter III.

Ver. 1. The *rebellious* (partic. of מָרָא) *city*, namely, against its God, and *polluted* with heathen practices, *violent* (partic. of יָנָה, in the sense of the Hiphil, as in Jer. xlvi. 16), is Jerusalem, as ver. 2 puts beyond doubt. Ver. 2. It has shown itself incorrigible, however God spoke to it. Because it had an evil conscience, it was also without confidence in God; because it refused to repent in earnest, it would not draw nigh to Him. Ver. 3. The nobles in Jerusalem must also, according to i. 8, have acted ill, probably encouraged by the king's minority. They are true beasts of prey, greedy after prey, like roaring lions or hungry wolves (evening wolves, cf. Hab. i. 8), which swallow their prey, skin and all, and do not dream of leaving anything till morning. Ver. 4. Moreover, they who should be God's messengers, bearers of His word, and guardians of His temple, are reckless corrupters of the nation. בָּהַז, properly to over-cook, here to be carried away by overpowering desire: cf. Comm. on Jer. xxiii. 32. Hitzig: "Instead of undertaking their duty in humble self-denial as mere bearers of divine commands, they try to assert their own subjectivity alongside or against God's words, and to assert their own subjective opinions as revelations." Such prophets are dishonest, and incur the guilt of treachery. Just so the *priests* desecrate what should be holy, treat it as profane and common, according to their own fancies and interests. This was certainly written before the religious

treacherous allies; her priests have profaned the holy things, outraged the law. 5. Yahveh is righteous in her midst, he does no evil; morning by morning he brings his judgment to light without fail, but the reprobate knows no shame. 6. I have rooted out nations, so that their street corners are desolate. I have made their streets waste, that none passes by; their cities are devastated, without men, without inhabitant. 7. I said: O that thou wouldst fear me, wouldst accept correction! Then destruction would not come on her dwelling-place, all that I have decreed concerning her: truly the more earnestly they carried out all their misdeeds from early morn.

reformation of Josiah. Ver. 5. In striking contrast with this perverse conduct of the dwellers in Jerusalem is the righteous government of the God who also dwells there. He does nothing morally perverse. On the contrary, every day anew He makes manifest His righteousness (differently from the human judges, Hab. i. 4), *i.e.* reveals His holy, righteous will, without ever permitting it to fail. But certainly the corrupt reprobate knows no shame, however plainly God's word may convict him. Perhaps the allusion is to the prophet's unwearied preaching, in which God's משפט is daily held up before the inhabitants of Jerusalem. But not only in words, but in mighty deeds, God reveals His justice. Samaria, Philistia, and other neighbours had been, or were now being, smitten by it. Ver. 6. פנות, here not (as in i. 16) the high turrets, but street corners, where most of the people congregate. On מבלי and מאין, as in ii. 5, see Comm. on Isa. v. 9.—צדה, in Aramaic and Syriac: *to devastate*, seems different from צוד = צדה, to seize (Steiner). Ver. 7. אמרתי corresponds to הכרתי, ver. 6. Although God judged the nations so terribly, He said to His people: Only fear me, etc., and no ill shall befall thee. All those judgments, as examples of God's strict justice, should only lead them to repentance.—*Her dwelling-place* is the temple, as the dwelling κατ' ἐξ., which is Jerusalem's diadem.—*All that I have decreed concerning her* (Jerusalem), joins on in meaning to the preceding ולא. A more complete statement would have been: and all should not happen. . . . אכן denotes strong position, and that in adversative sense: even then! In such a state of things they gave themselves the more to iniquitous acts. They rise early, thus going early to work every morning like the Lord, in defiance of Him.

8. Therefore wait ye for me, is Yahveh's oracle, on the day when I rise up as a witness*. For my decree is to gather together nations, that I may assemble kingdoms to pour out upon them my indignation, all my fierce wrath. For in the fire of my zeal the whole earth shall be consumed. 9. For at that time I will turn to the peoples a pure lip, that they may all call on the name of Yahveh, serve him with one neck. 10. From beyond the rivers of Cush, my suppliants, the congregation of my scattered ones, shall bring my offering.

Ver. 8. חכו־לי, not ironically (Hitz.), but addressed to the quiet ones in the land, who might despair because of the general ungodliness and wrong. They are not only to wait for judgment (ver. 8), but especially for the salvation which will issue therefrom (ver. 9 ff.).—לָעַד, understood temporally (= לָעַד), would yield no sense. Kleinert, Keil: "for the prey," is little relevant; Ewald: "for the attack," a meaning without warrant. Read after LXX, Syr. לָעֵד. After Yahveh has been long despised and neglected, He will arise before the world as an accusing witness, and also judge.—משפטי, my judicial decision, sentence, containing here not merely the judgment, but especially the mode of its execution. לקבצי מ', for my gathering together the kingdoms, is subordinate to the, in itself neutral, לאסף; and again the final ליצק, indicating most plainly the judicial decision, is subordinate to the former.—It is God's purpose to make the whole earth feel the full power of the divine anger against sin; cf. i. 2 ff. The root passage is Joel iv. 2 ff., both in wording and conception.—וְזַעְמִי, Baer needlessly with dagesh dirimens.—*In the fire of my zeal*, etc., as in i. 18.—This ver. 8, according to the Massoretes, is the only verse of the Bible in which all the letters of the alphabet, even the final letters, occur. Ver. 9. The judgment is merely a means in order to purify, as חקו already intimated to hope.—הפך with אל, literally, "to turn to:" but the word implies the change (1 Sam. v. 9) which God will work in them, when He cleanses their lips and language (Gen. xi. 1), hitherto stained by godless speeches, that with one mind they may call on the name of Yahveh. The sing. שפה stands in contrast with the plur. עמים, although it is not expressly said that they will outwardly speak but one language. The chief matter is that all will call on Yahveh's name (cf. ii. 11), and be subject to Him. Bearing one and the same yoke, they serve Him, in a sense, with *one shoulder*. Ver. 10. As in ii. 12 the

11. On that day thou shalt no more be ashamed for all the misdeeds which thou committedst against me, for then will I remove from thy midst thy arrogantly exulting ones, and thou shalt no more be haughty on my holy mountain. 12. And I leave in thy midst a poor, needy people; and they hide themselves in the name of Yahveh. 13. Those remaining of Israel shall do no evil, and speak no lies, and in their mouth no deceitful tongue is found. For they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.

14. Sing, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with the whole heart, O daughter of Jerusalem!

farthest southern country is mentioned, where God will still have worshippers. To עתרי is added, as an explanatory apposition, בת פוצי, *my daughter of the scattered ones*, i.e. diaspora. Yahveh then has worshippers in spirit and in truth in the farthest heathen lands, and regards them as His diaspora, His scattered Church. These will bring gifts of homage (first-fruits, etc.) in solemn procession, namely, to Jerusalem (cf. on ii. 11). Some explain the passage differently, according to the later Isa. lxvi. 20, in the sense that the worshippers of Yahveh and His scattered ones are the object of the offering of the heathen: as my meat-offering, or at least בת פוצי, as accus. in this sense. But the two expressions are most naturally understood as co-ordinate nominatives, and in this sense Isa. xviii. 7 already spoke of the same people. Ver. 11 is addressed to the Church on Zion, which will also have gone through a purifying process. Then the sense of guilt, the torment of self-reproach, ceases. As a transitory stage certainly this internal self-condemnation, of which at present they are, alas! incapable (ii. 1, iii. 5), is indispensable; cf. Ezek. xvi. 61, 63, etc. But in the state of blessed acceptance, which God introduces, this self-condemnation will have no place. The past is done away (ver. 15; Micah vii. 19), and—to which the language here at once passes on—by destroying the transgressors the Lord has provided at that very time that in the future sins of arrogance shall be no more seen. — לגבהה, infinitive, Ges. § 45, 1*b*. Ver. 12. The poverty and need of the survivors will preserve them humble, and lead to trust in God. Isa. xiv. 30 is similar in tone. Ver. 13. As regards equity, truth, and peaceableness, that people of the Lord will present the opposite of what the Jerusalemites are to-day. In keeping with its innocence it is viewed as a nation of shepherds, as in Isa. xiv. 30. Ver. 14. Cf.

15. Yahveh has taken away thy judgments, purged out thy foe. King of Israel is Yahveh in thy midst, thou shalt no longer have to fear evil. 16. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Fear not! Zion, let not thy hands be slack! 17. Yahveh, thy God, is in thy midst, a mighty one able to save. He delights in thee in love, is silent in his joy, exults over thee with singing! 18. The anxious ones far from the assembly I will gather; they are thine; upon her the reproach is a burden. 19. Behold, I will deal with all thy oppressors at that time, and will save that which is lame, and gather together that which is scattered, and set them for praise and

the later passage, Zech. ii. 14, and also Zech. ix. 9.—*Daughter of Zion*, cf. as to form Comm. on Isa. i. 8. Ver. 15. If God has removed the judgments, and purged away the enemies guilty of such deeds, He has taken away the burden of guilt which made the judgments necessary.—*Yahveh, King* (cf. Obad. 21 already) *of Israel;* the *entire* nation is then again gathered round His throne on Zion. Ver. 16. אמר לְ means, in Hos. ii. 1, directly: to give one a name, which would well suit the first clause here (cf. Isa. lxii. 11 f.); but then we should expect ולציון instead of the vocative.—*Letting the hands hang down*, a sign of despondency. The final Church, on the contrary, is decided and full of energy. Ver. 17. The God, who dwells in Zion, is a *mighty one* (cf. Isa. ix. 5, of the divine-human Messiah), strong enough to fortify against all evil.—ישיש ע' ב', like a bridegroom who finds nothing but rapture in his bride.—*Is silent in his delight*, borrowed from the same relation. The lover is absorbed with quiet joy in the object of his affection. To explain the silence of ceasing from divine rebuke is too weak, although such rebuke, of course, is over. The reading יחדיש (LXX) does not suit the context; it would mean: he will do a new thing (Hitz.), or renew his youth (Ewald).—The silence of the lover turns into *loud singing*. Ver. 18. *The anxious ones* (for נוּגֵי, partic. Niph. of יָגָה) *away from the assembly*, i.e. who grieve because they are cut off from the place and feast where God meets with His people.—מכּך, of thee, belonging to thee.—עליה, Hitz. *et al.*, refer to the גּוֹלָה, the congregation of exiles; it is better applied to the congregation addressed, on which the captivity of many of its members lies as a reproach. Ver. 19. עשׂה, absolutely, according to the context, *in malam partem;* to be supplemented as in Micah v. 14; Ezek. xxiii. 25.—*That which is lame*, etc.,

renown in the whole earth, where their shame was. 20. At that time I will bring you in, and at the time when I gather you together, for I will make you a renown and a praise among all nations of the earth, when I bring home your captives before your eyes, Yahveh said.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. iii. The Judgment purifies Jerusalem and makes it God's city, and makes the World God's kingdom. *a.* The corrupt Jerusalem of the present, vv. 1–7; *b.* the Transforming of the Heathen, ver. 8 f.; *c.* the Transforming of Israel-Judah, vv. 10–13; *d.* the Final Happiness of Zion, vv. 14–20.

After, in chs. i., ii., the salutary aim of God's dealings with regard to Israel and the heathen world has been cursorily indicated, in this final oracle the gracious purpose which God has in view, even in His judgments, finds full expression. That we may rightly measure the distance between His people as they actually are, and as they ought to be, and also will be under God's wondrous leading, vv. 1–7 once more set before our eyes the disorganised Jerusalem of the present. But although its princes are thieves instead of protectors, its prophets bold jugglers instead of God's witnesses, its priests despisers instead of guardians of holy things, there is yet one in the city who could teach all that is right, if men would only attend to His word and His visible reign in the outer world. But He finds no attention. He must therefore make

see on Micah iv. 6.—*For a praise and a name*, or renown. . . . According to Deut. xxvi. 19, this was Israel's destiny of old. The same found undreamt-of fulfilment when the dispersion issued in redemption, and redemption in the acknowledgment of its God in the whole earth. בכל הארץ בשתם, contracted mode of expression for אשר בשתם שָׁם or בָּהּ. The genitive relation is therefore a loose one, and the article may intervene. Cf. Philippi, *Status Constr.* p. 38. Ver. 20. Cf. Deut. xxx. 3 ff.

the world feel the whole weight of His judicial decree, and pour out the entire fulness of His wrath on the nations. The effect of this will be a blessed metamorphosis; the nations will call on Him as with one mouth (ver. 9), and send their gifts of homage from the farthest regions (ver. 10). And His own people will go forth from the heavy judgment, to which it falls a prey, reconciled and purified from its evil ways. There will be left a simple, poor, unostentatious people, dwelling quietly, piously, and peacefully in the land. These humble ones, whom the prophet sees in vision, are in the fulfilment the poor in spirit, the meek and peaceful, to whom the Preacher of the Mount promises the kingdom of heaven. As matter of fact, at the coming of Christ pride was the worst hindrance to men becoming partakers of salvation. Pride condemned itself when it scornfully refused to enter by that lowly gate by which the poor and ignorant found admission. In that last time of which Zephaniah speaks, and in which also the captive and scattered are to return home, the Lord will rejoice with unalloyed delight in His Church, standing in the closest, most loving fellowship with it. Ver. 17, describing this, is one of the boldest sayings in the Bible. It would have been simply criminal to speak so of God, had not the prophet, like Hosea, seen deeper than all human reason into the mystery of God's love to man.

Thus this small prophetic book is not wanting in lofty spiritual vision. True, it does not speak specifically of the person of the divine-human King as the mediator of that new kingdom and fellowship of God; its oracles are not Messianic in *this* sense. But its predictions are entirely eschatological. They point on directly to the blessed goal, and depict the Lord's dwelling in His Church with mysterious fervour, His rule over the nations, with the extension of His Church to all, so that differences of language and creed are abolished, and all as with one mouth call on His name, while His elect Church is raised above every gulf separating it from the holy God.

HAGGAI.

Introduction.

The prophet Haggai (חַגַּי, the festive one, perhaps born at a feast; LXX: Ἀγγαῖος; Vulg.: Aggæus) is mentioned, along with his companion Zechariah, also in Ezra v. 1, vi. 14; according to these passages the two prophets, by their prophecies, were the means of the temple-building being undertaken, and they helped on its completion. Further particulars about their lives we do not get there. That Haggai was older than Zechariah is rendered probable by the fact that he is named before the latter, and also, according to the dates of the oracles, began to prophesy before the latter, and then soon vanishes. From Hag. ii. 3, Ewald and others have inferred that Haggai himself saw the old temple; in which case, as seventy years had passed since its destruction, he must have been of a very advanced age. All the more precisely is the date of his appearance indicated in the case of each of his oracles. These all belong to the second year of Darius (520 B.C.), and, indeed, to its sixth, seventh, and ninth months, whereas the earliest oracles of Zechariah belong to the eighth and eleventh months of the same year; so that for a long time the two prophets spoke alternately to the people. All this happened in the decisive year when, at their instance, the building of the temple, which had long been at a standstill, was at last taken in hand with energy, and brought to the conclusion which it reached in the sixth year of Darius. According to Ezra iii. 8, indeed, the foundation

of the temple was already laid under Cyrus, in the second year after the return of the exiles. But the obstacles they encountered, the inadequate means at their command, and, above all, anxiety for their own dwellings and support, soon caused their zeal to cool and the work to come to a standstill. It has recently been contended, on grounds which are not altogether without weight, that nothing at all was done in that second year after the return (534), in which Ezra iii. puts the laying the foundation of the temple, as according to Hag. ii. 18, Zech. viii. 9, the founding of the temple is first taken in hand in the second year of Darius, and Ezra v. 2 also speaks, not of a resumption, but of the beginning of the building, etc. So Schrader, *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* 1867, p. 460 ff., with whom Steiner, *et al.*, agree. See, on the other hand, the defence of the historical character of Ezra iii. by F. W. Schultz in Lange's *Comm.*, and Oettli's proof of the interruption of the building on Ezra iv. 5, v. 16, and in the excursus to ch. iv. The supposition of an unhistorical account in Ezra iii. is contradicted, not only by the fact that, according to Hag. ii. 14, sacrifices were offered at a holy place before the appearance of Haggai,—and therefore the first part of Ezra iii., which relates the erection of the altar of burnt-offering, is shown to be no mere castle in the air,—but also by the assumption implied in Hag. ii. 3, that the temple was already visible in its outlines and partial beginnings, which gave intimation of its future importance. So apparently the idea of יסד, like, as is well known, that of בנה (to build, finish building, etc.), should be taken elastically, and understood here of a relative beginning.

However this may be, in any case it was Haggai's mission to stir up and encourage the colony for the work which, from indifference and want of faith, it had all too long neglected. His discourses move entirely around this temple-building. The first one rebukes the indolence of the people, which seemed to him untimely (i. 2–11). The second one encourages to the

work by the assurance of the almighty help of God, who will bring His house to honour (ii. 2 ff.; cf. already the saying i. 13). The third one, on the "foundation-day," when they began again to lay stone on stone, announces a complete change in the mind of God, who, instead of evil, will now dispense good (ii. 10–19). The fourth oracle (ii. 20–23) speaks of the high dignity and importance of Zerubbabel, the royal builder of the temple and heir of the old Davidic promises.

These discourses were, of course, first delivered orally before all the people and its leaders, then written down in substance, and that by the hand of the prophet himself. In form they do not exhibit the poetical fervour and original wealth of thought and figure which we admire in pre-exilic prophets, but bear on their face the impress of the poverty of the age. The phraseology is awkward, diffuse, and abounding in repetitions; the latter, however, make the prophet's language all the more penetrating and emphatic. Nägelsbach well remarks: "Under a large, thick shell, he usually conceals a small but highly valuable kernel." To the power of his language the issue gives the best testimony. On the spirit pervading his words, see after ch. i.

Special works: Aug. Köhler, *Die Weissagungen Haggais*, 1860; L. Reinke (Cath.), *Der proph. Haggai*, 1868; Wilh. Pressel, *Hag., Sach., Mal.*, 1870.

First Discourse: Address yourselves to work, ye indolent ones!

I. 1. In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, came Yahveh's word, through

Chapter I.

Ver. 1. בשנת ישתים, Ges. § 120, 4.—לדריוש; old Persian form: *Darjawusch* (from Zend. *dar*, Sanscr. *dhar*, to hold together; hence Herod. vi. 98: ἐρξείης); cf. the Babylonian form, Schrader, ii. 63; *Darius*, son of Hystaspes. The reckoning by this Persian

Haggai, the prophet, to Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and to Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, as follows: 2. Thus speaks Yahveh of hosts, saying: These people say: It is not yet time to appear, the time of the house of Yahveh to build it. 3. Then came the word of Yahveh, through Haggai, the prophet, as follows: 4. Is it

as *king* stamps the low state of the Jewish nation at this time. The second year of his reign is 520 B.C.; the sixth month: *Elul*, falling mostly in September.—*On the first day*, therefore new moon, when the people assembled for worship, and the want of a proper house of God must have been the more strongly felt. ביד, see Comm. on Jer. xxxvii. 2.—On the person of *Haggai*, see Introd.—זרבבל from זֶרַע בָּבֶל, sprung from Babylon; Schrader, ii. 66. *Son of Shealtiel* (contracted from i. 12, ii. 2), and therefore grandson of Jechoniah = Jehoiachin, who was carried captive to Babylon, according to 1 Chron. iii. 17, which passage certainly derives Zerubbabel from another son of Jehoiachin; see 1 Chron. iii. 19. Zerubbabel is also called שֵׁשְׁבַּצַּר; see Ezra i. 8. This Davidite was appointed by Cyrus governor (Jer. li. 23) of Judah, Ezra v. 14.—*Judah*, the land is here called; for it, as for the nation, the tribal name is now gradually becoming the ruling one. (Ecolampadius here recalls Gen. xlix. 10.—The ecclesiastical appears alongside the secular ruler; but in the second place, as Ibn Ezra early points out.—*Jehozadak's* father, Seraiah, had been killed by Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Kings xxv. 18 ff.; Jer. lii. 24 ff.; he himself was carried into exile, 1 Chron. v. 41. Ver. 2. *It is not yet time* (לֹא for "not yet," as in Gen. ii. 5), *i.e.* the right time (Orelli, *Synon. der Zeit*, p. 48 ff.) *to come*, to present oneself, namely, to build the temple; cf. ויבאו, ver. 14. The words: the time of the house of Yahveh, are added by way of explanation.—In Haggai, whose style is generally difficult, the awkward phraseology ought not to cause much surprise. LXX ignore the first עת and read בָּה, but at any rate give the text inaccurately. Hitz., instead of the first עת, reads עֵתָה for עַתָּה (Ps. lxxiv. 6). Ewald, Keil, Reinke also retain the Massoretic text. Ver. 3. The words of the people have made the author forget that he has already put them into the mouth of Yahveh, on which account he again introduces Yahveh's words. Ver. 4. עֵת, as in ver. 2, the *fit* time. אַתֶּם, Ges. § 121, 3.—ספונים (see on Jer. xxii. 14), without article, which is seldom absent after substantives

then time for you yourselves to dwell in your wainscoted houses, whereas this house lies waste? 5. And now, thus says Yahveh of hosts: Lay to heart your ways: 6. you have sown abundantly and brought in sparely, have eaten and were not satisfied, drunk and were not filled, clothed yourselves and there was none warm; and he who hired himself for wages put it in a bag with holes. 7. Thus says Yahveh of hosts: Lay to heart your ways! 8. Go up into the hill-

with suff., follows loosely and the more emphatically: in your houses, wainscoted = "and that wainscoted." Jerome: ornatis atque compositis, et quæ non tam ad usum sunt quam ad delicias. Cedar-wainscoting was also an ornament of the temple, 1 Kings vi. 9, vii. 3! Ver. 5. שִׂים לבב, as in ver. 7 and ii. 15, 18, *animum* (לֵבָב, the mental organ of perception) *advertere*. The summons directs their attention to the slight result which rewarded their toil in so self-seeking a spirit, therefore to the merited divine punishment.—*Your ways* = how you have fared. Jerome: considerate et in memoriam redigite quæ feceritis et quæ passi sitis. Ver. 6. A curse was on the labour, on meat and drink and clothing, on the hard-earned money. The absolute infinitives, which heighten the liveliness of the enumeration, are governed by the preceding זרעתם. The meaning is not that they did not venture to eat enough (Hitz.), but that the satisfaction as little corresponded to the amount eaten as the harvest to the quantity sown. Similarly Micah vi. 14; cf. also Hos. iv. 10; Lev. xxvi. 26.—שכר (of which infin. here) applies often not to immoderate enjoyment, but to a satisfying state of repletion.—Of חַם לִי (I am warm; cf. 1 Kings i. 2), the infin. stands here.—The day-labourer (שָׂכִיר) hires himself, pledges his person and strength for wages (שָׂכָר); but his wages go into a bag with holes—is gone before it is put to use. Ver. 7. This fresh allusion to their experience leads on to the summons, ver. 8. Laying to heart their experience should determine them to set to work. Ver. 8. Wood needs to be fetched from the hills; there was plenty of stone near at hand.—As long as the temple lies waste, God can delight on nothing on earth, cannot let His eye rest on anything with pleasure, and does not see Himself glorified. So Ew., Hitz.: "and feel myself honoured." Others: "and glorify myself, namely, in my temple and people, and so bless it." Keri, with paragogic ה, which, however, may be dispensed with; Baer-Del.: וְאֶכְבְּדָ. The lacking ה (= 5) the

country, and get wood and build the house, that I may take pleasure therein and know myself glorified, has Yahveh said. 9. You looked for much, and, behold, it came to little! and you brought home, and I blew it away. Wherefore? is the oracle of Yahveh of hosts. Because of my house which lies waste, whereas every one of you runs to his own house. 10. Therefore have the heavens held back the dew above you, and the earth held back its fruit. 11. And I called for drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the wheat, and upon the wine, and upon the oil, and upon what the earth brought forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all that the hands had worked for.

12. Then Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua, the

Babyl. treatise Yoma, 21*b*, explains of the five things lacking in the second temple: 1. the ark, with cover and cherubim; 2. the holy fire; 3. the Shechinah; 4. the spirit of prophecy; 5. Urim and Thummim. Ver. 9 resumes the description of the painful experience, ver. 6. The infinitive is from there. פנה, easily intelligible: to turn toward something with the secondary idea of hope, joyous expectation.—In consequence of the divine curse the stores vanished in a moment.—רצים pictures the speed with which they ran after their private business, whereas the temple was forsaken and solitary. Hitz.: "whereas, for every one among you, his own house is the aim of his zealous efforts." Ver. 10. Hence the drought, from which they had plainly to suffer much in the last years.—כלא, to shut up, hold back, is transitive; but the first time the construction takes a different turn, with privative מִן. The *dew*, which in the summer months replaces the rain, will be as grievously absent as the latter. *Over you*, in local sense, as in Deut. xxviii. 23. Ver. 11. חֹרֶב is in retribution for the חָרֵב, vv. 4, 9. So already Ibn Ezra, Abrabanel. Here it is not devastation (still less חֶרֶב, LXX!), but just the drought spoken of already in ver. 10.—*Wheat, wine, oil*, as in Hos. ii. 10 and often. On *men* and *beasts*, also, this plague is invoked, because they have grievously to suffer by it; cf., in regard to the latter, Joel i. 18.—All the labour of the hands is added here, as in Ps. cxxviii. 2, in reference to products of the earth, in order to recall how much human labour is frustrated thereby. Ver. 12. שׁמע, with בְּ, *to hearken to* = to accept obediently, intimates that they showed themselves willing to obey, although

son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the whole of the rest of the people, hearkened to the voice of Yahveh, their God, and to the words of Haggai, the prophet, as Yahveh their God had sent him; and the people feared before Yahveh. 13. Then spake Haggai, the messenger of Yahveh, in a divine mission to the people, thus: I am with you, is Yahveh's oracle.—14. Then Yahveh stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the rest of the people, that they came and carried on work in the house of Yahveh of hosts, their God, 15. on the four and twentieth day of the month, in the sixth (month), in the second year of King Darius.

they did not yet set to work; afterwards, with the more unusual עַל, in the same sense (as in Jer. xxvi. 5).—*The entire remnant of the people*, as in ii. 2, the rest of the people beside the leaders enumerated = "the entire people of the land," ii. 4. On the other hand, Hitz. explains it differently, according to Zech. viii. 6, where, however, the context is different.—The prophet's words are to be listened to like Yahveh's, *in keeping with the fact that* (באשר) the former was sent by the latter. LXX, Syr. add: "to them." אליהם may certainly easily have dropped out; cf. Jer. xliii. 1. Ver. 13. מלאך; the prophet is here called messenger, because it is his office to convey divine messages; also of the priests, Mal. ii. 7.—*In divine mission*, in the capacity of a מלאך, not by his own judgment = בִּדְבַר ה׳, 1 Kings xiii. 18. *I am with you*, brief but pregnant assurance, promising them in the work, for which they show themselves ready, divine assistance, protection, and honour. Ver. 14. הֵעִיר אֶת־רוּחַ denotes often, in later books, the divine incitement of man's spirit to God-pleasing action, *e.g.* Ezra i. 1, 5; 1 Chron. v. 26. Œcolampadius: "So much are our good works the Lord's, that even the willing and venturing proceeds from Him." Ver. 15 gives another date indicating the moment when the work was taken in hand; for it cannot be joined with ch. ii., where a new date at once follows. As the words stand, "carrying out the work in the house of Yahveh," ver. 14 must be understood of preparatory labour,—removing rubbish, collecting material, etc.,—as the first stone is laid, and the proper beginning of the building made, exactly three months later (according to ii. 10, 18). But the precise agree-

Exposition.

Contents of ch. i. First Discourse of Haggai: Address yourselves to the work, ye indolent ones! 1. Indolence rebuked, vv. 2–4; 2. Description of the evil it caused, with summons to action, vv. 5–11; 3. Effect of the discourse, vv. 12–15.

The first discourse, the practical issue of which is the summons, ver. 8, is addressed primarily to the two heads of the Judæan community, the representatives of the monarchy and the priesthood, whose offices were just as indispensable to the Israelitish commonwealth as the temple itself, and who must lead the way with counsel and act in the building of the temple. Yet the sharp rebuke running through this discourse is plainly not directed against these two, who had perhaps long been impatient for the continuance of the work, but against the nation, which had left them without support, and excused its laziness and worldly spirit with the favourite excuses in such cases: The undertaking is not timely (ver. 2), the circumstances are still too unfavourable, God's hour is not yet come, which did not prevent them providing for their own comfort, despite the unfavourable time (ver. 4). On the contrary, Haggai assures them at once of the divine assistance, as soon as they are willing to do anything in God's honour, instead of putting Him off with fine language. He gives no

ment with that date, ii. 10, 18, suggests the conjecture that an annotator has taken the words, which are appended very loosely in i. 15, from there and inserted them here: on the four and twentieth day of the month, in the ninth, etc.; but a later writer, instead of ninth, put: in the sixth, because in ch. i. elsewhere the sixth month is found, and in ch. ii. 1 the seventh follows.—At any rate, it was not merely three weeks before the proper work of building could begin, but three months before consultings, organising the people, removing the rubbish, etc., were finished. Readiness to work was certainly expressed, and preparations for it were made, which is also assumed in ii. 1 ff.

intimation that he draws this assurance from Jer. xxv. 11 f., because the temple has now lain waste almost seventy years, or that the change of government in the Persian capital gives him hope, but he takes his stand simply on the word of the Lord which has come to him.

The rising of Yahveh's house out of its ruin was now the primary condition of the continuance and revived prosperity of Yahveh's Church; and in the greater or less willingness to bring offerings for the purpose the greater or less attachment to Yahveh Himself was reflected. Hence the zeal which Haggai and Zechariah display for the work ought not to strike us as unprophetic. De Wette (*Einl. ins A. T.*, Aufl. 7) finds fault with Haggai. "He rebukes without enthusiasm, exhorts and promises on the principles of a common doctrine of retribution and the suggestions of a mean patriotism (ii. 6–9), along with unprophetic zeal for the restoring of the old cultus." But as concerns the idea of retribution in God's blessing and anger taught here (and in ch. ii.), it is only common in so far as it rests upon a view of divine control even in the dispensing of natural gifts and blessings common to the prophets and the Torah. One thing certainly must be conceded: Haggai assumes no enthusiasm in his countrymen for ideal blessings, nay, he scarcely regards many of them as capable of it; therefore he appeals first, not to their patriotism, their sense of honour, their love and gratitude to God (cf., however, the honour of God, ver. 8), but to their keen sense of their own interest; he reckons up to them how little they have gained by their miserable saving and toiling. A selfish generation, poor in higher aspirations and devoted only to material gain, must be convinced what great losses it incurs even outwardly by departing from God, the giver of all good things. This reference to the bitter experiences of recent days must have had a piercing effect on the hearers. Their conscience woke up, and there were expressions indicating their change of mind (ver. 12), on which Haggai was able at

once to follow up his rebukes by a word of comfort (ver. 13). Ver. 14 f. remarks by way of preliminary that action also followed.

Second Discourse: Be of good Cheer!

II. 1. In the seventh (month), on the one and twentieth (day) of the month came Yahveh's word through Haggai, the prophet, as follows: 2. Speak now to Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and to Joshua, the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the rest of the people as follows: 3. Who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory, and how do you see it now? Is it not as nothing in your eyes? 4. And now be of good cheer, Zerub-

Chapter II.

Ver. 1. *In the seventh* (month, *i.e.* Tishri, corresponding for the most part to October), *on the twenty-first* (day) *of the month;* thus about seven weeks after the festival-address in i. 1, Haggai delivered a second, again on a feast-day, the seventh of the feast of Tabernacles: cf. Lev. xxiii. 24 ff., 39. Ver. 2. The prophet is addressed as if it said, ver. 1, אֶל חגי. The address as in i. 1, but with "the rest of the people" added (i. 12, 14). Ver. 3. הנשאר. The article expresses a definition of quality: such an one as is left. The singular form certainly intimates that those in question were only found here and there, whereas fourteen years before, at the stone-laying, there were many of them, Ezra iii. 12. — *This house,* etc. According to the Israelitish view there was not a Solomonic, Zerubbabel, Herodian temple, but only one house of Yahveh in different forms on Zion.—*Et qualem eam nunc videtis?* מה, as in Num. xiii. 18.—Respecting the twofold כְּ, see on Hos. iv. 9.—The mean look of the present temple will refer, not so much to its dimensions (those stated in Ezra vi. 3 would even surpass the Solomonic), as rather to the style of building and equipment, which in view of the scanty means and the absence of irreplaceable treasures like the ark, etc., must have had a poor and unfinished appearance; cf. Zech. iv. 10. The prophet does not hesitate to concede the difference in order the more brightly to illustrate the promise. Ver. 4. חזק, expresses the firm, confident state of mind, when a man, sure of his cause, can

babel!—is the oracle of Yahveh,—and be of good cheer, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, thou high priest! And be of good cheer, all ye people of the land!—is Yahveh's oracle—and work! For I am with you, is the oracle of Yahveh of hosts. 5. The word, which I covenanted with you, when you came out of Egypt—and my spirit shall abide continually in your midst. Fear ye not! 6. For thus says Yahveh of hosts: There is yet one time, a short one, then will I shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land; 7. and I will stir up all heathen nations, and the most precious things of all the heathen shall come, and I will fill this house with

prosecute it with energy. This inward strength rests here, as in Josh. i. 6, 7, 9, on the consciousness of divine assistance. Ver. 5. The accus. את הדבר, very diversely explained, depends on an unexpressed transitive verb, corresponding to the intransitive עמדת; perhaps Hiphil of קום, in the sense of Isa. xl. 8: The word, which I settled with you (כרתי, stipulated, Ges. § 44, Anm. 6), I will keep; the word shall be observed; the verb was not expressed, because that of the second clause is akin in meaning: That word shall have permanent validity, the Spirit shall permanently abide. The reference in that word is to the promise of mutual possession, Ex. vi. 7, xix. 5, to which Jeremiah and Ezekiel so often allude.—כרת דבר, to settle a word by agreement, formed from the phrase כרת ברית. *God's Spirit*, who dwells in their midst (not: in their heart) as a spirit of revelation and power for all God-pleasing work, is the best security for their union with God and the success of their work; cf. Zech. iv. 6. Only this promise is not to be limited to the building of the temple. Cf. the similar, Isa. lix. 21.—*Fear ye not*, warns against loss of heart, as if the work were hopeless. The prophet is fond of condensing the chief thought in a brief final saying; therefore not to be attached to what follows. Ver. 6. עוד אחת, LXX erroneously: "once again" (after which Heb. xii. 26); cf. rather as to the meaning of עוד Comm. on Isa. x. 25 and on Hab. ii. 3; also Ex. xvii. 4. Properly, one (neuter=a section of time) yet lasts, and that a brief one,—then will I . . .—The shaking, which Yahveh then effects, embraces the whole creation. Ver. 7 indicates the aim of this universal convulsion.—חמדת כ' ה', the *deliciæ* of all nations, the most costly things they have, in which they find their highest delight; not directly personal, "the noblest of the heathen" (LXX, Hitz. *et al.*), as little as חיל in Isa. lx. 5; the

glory, has Yahveh of hosts said. 8. Mine is the silver and mine the gold, says Yahveh of hosts. 9. Greater shall be the after glory of this house than the former, has Yahveh of hosts said. And in this place I will give peace, is the oracle of Yahveh of hosts.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. ii. 1–9. Second Discourse: Be of good cheer! 1. Consolation for the poverty of outward circumstances, vv. 1–6; 2. Promise of undreamt-of glory in the new Temple, vv. 7–9.

This discourse falls about seven weeks later than the first one, and therefore at a time when preparations for the building were being earnestly urged on. If it was said there, Work! it is now said, Be of good cheer! This appeal to such as were obedient, but timid and of little faith, is supported by glorious promises. This timidity, which the prophet wishes to check, has its ground, as appears from the discourse itself, in the scantiness of means and resources which had troubled the hearts of many even at the first stone-laying. The reference is not merely to poverty in gold and silver, but also to the want of the divine insignia and

reference is rather to what they bring to the temple by way of homage.—Vulg.: et veniet desideratus cunctis gentibus; Luth.: "then shall the comfort of all the heathen come." But this personal Messianic interpretation is wrecked on the plur. וּבָאוּ.—*I fill this house with glory*, applies in this connection to the glory which God will cause to come out of the world into His house in the form of gifts of homage (cf. i. 8), not to the heavenly gifts with which He will fill it from Himself (1 Kings viii. 11). Ver. 8. What is called silver and gold, this is at my command. Ver. 9 gives the complete answer to the complaints challenged in ver. 3.—*In this place*, applies to the temple. As the most precious things gather here, so God's most precious gift proceeds from here, *peace* in the strict sense, such as proceeds from Zion, Isa. ii. 3 f., xi. 6 ff.; and in the wider range: undisturbed inward and outward wellbeing, prosperity.

jewels, which could not be replaced. The fear of resistance on the part of envious opponents (cf. Ezra v. 3) might still perhaps have a discouraging influence, but is here less conspicuous. Let it comfort them for the present, that the Lord is with them with His spiritual gifts, which should be more highly valued than all gold and silver (ver. 5). Yet this outward insignificance shall not be permanent. On the contrary, there is near at hand a complete inward and outward transforming of the world. By God's powerful interposition the temple, despite its poor appearance, shall draw to itself the attention and reverential desire of all nations. They will bring thither in homage the noblest and most precious things, obtaining there a treasure which they do not possess: the peace of God, embracing in itself all salvation and all happiness.

This oracle of Haggai was in the circumstances of the age of astounding boldness, and if the prophet had not been illuminated for it from above, we might judge of it as de Wette does (p. 289). But it was not fantastic "patriotism" which moved him thereto, but God's unerring Spirit. This is shown by the fulfilment. Even in outward respects the fulfilment was not wanting. The after glory of the house was greater than the former. Not only in the course of time did many non-Israelitish princes show it honour and accord it their favour, like Darius (Ezra vi. 6–12), Artaxerxes (Ezra vii. 12 ff.), and later ones (2 Macc. iii. 2; Joseph. *Bell. Jud.* ii. 17. 3); but, in fact, this post-exilic temple was more gloriously adorned by Herod than ever the pre-exilic one had been (Joseph. *Ant.* xv. 11). But certainly all this was at most a prelude to the fulfilment. The prophecy was far from being exhausted in it. The world-embracing transformation here set before the view, was brought about by Jesus Christ, who opened His Father's house to the heathen. In this the chief point is not, that within the precincts of this temple, founded by Zerubbabel, Jesus sounded forth the peaceful

message of the gospel, and by His presence adorned this house more gloriously than all the sacredness of the Old Covenant had done, although even this was important in the carrying out of prophecy and fulfilment; the most important point was, that in Israel and from Israel, Christ established for all nations the most glorious scene of the worship of the true God. Of course the temple of stone had to give place to a spiritual one. To Haggai the temple of stone is still identical with the dwelling of the true God, as Zerubbabel for a time takes the place of the Messiah. In Zechariah, on the other hand, the more ideal temple of the future and the priest-king of the time of consummation are severed from their representatives of that day.

Finally, as relates to the brief time which Haggai allows for the beginning of that epoch, ii. 6, whereas half a millennium intervened before the birth of the Messiah, we should not forget that the history of a temple must be measured by another standard than that of a man; and, moreover, 2 Pet. iii. 8 applies to the stages in the growth of God's kingdom. But with the restoration of the theocracy after the exile, the last stage was reached before its complete transformation, and the great national movements soon to begin paved the way for that state of the world, which by a wise arrangement was destined to precede the entrance of the kingdom of God.

Third Discourse: Comforting Disclosures respecting the Effects of the Temple-building.

II. 10. On the four and twentieth (day) of the ninth (month), in the second year of Darius, came Yahveh's word through Haggai, the prophet, as follows: 11. Thus has

Ver. 10. The ninth month, Chisleu, falling in the second half of November and December: the time of the early rain and the sowing of winter crops following thereon. Ver. 11. שאל תורה, to ask legal advice. It was the office of the priests to give this in individual cases; cf. Deut. xxxiii. 10; Mal. ii. 7.

Yahveh of hosts said: Seek now of the priests instruction in the law as follows: 12. Suppose a man bears sacred flesh in the skirt of his garment, and he touches with his skirt bread or cooked things, or wine, or oil, or any meat, will this be sacred? Then the priests answered and said, No. 13. Then said Haggai, But if one unclean from a dead man touch all this, will it be unclean? Then the priests answered and said, It will be unclean. 14. Then Haggai answered and said, Such is this people, and such this nation before me, is Yahveh's oracle; and such all the labour of their hands, and what they offer there—this is unclean. 15. And now, I pray you, lay to heart from this day back-

Beside the written law they knew also the legal usage, by which the law was interpreted and supplemented. Ver. 12. הֵן, see on Jer. iii. 1; = אִם, ver. 13.—*Holy flesh* (Jer. xi. 15), *i.e.* flesh of a victim offered to God. The garment itself, brought into contact with sacrificial flesh, according to Lev. vi. 20, is holy. Yet its holiness, according to the declaration of the priests, who possess a more detailed tradition, does not extend farther. That the prophet actually asked them according to the direction received, is passed over as self-evident. Ver. 13. In the same way it is assumed here that the second question was dictated to Haggai by the Lord.—טמא נפש, as in Lev. xxii. 4, one made unclean by the soul of a dead man; = לנפש ט', Lev. xix. 28, Num. ix. 6 f.; more completely נפש מת, Lev. xxi. 11. As death is repulsive to the living and holy God, whoever touches a corpse or comes near it is made unclean by the outgoing *soul* of the dead person; cf. Num. xix. 11 ff. and elsewhere.—The affirmative answer agrees with Num. xix. 22, according to which one defiled in this way makes everything he touches unclean. Ver. 14. *He answered;* he addressed this apostrophe not only to the priests, but, of course, to the people themselves.—כֵּן = *talis.* As they are just as much polluted in God's sight by neglect of holy things as a man defiled by a corpse, so they pollute everything they touch.—הגוי, contemptuously: this people living without God like the heathen.—לפני, before me, in my eyes.—The product of their labour is unclean; so also what they offer *there* (on the altar already standing, Ezra iii. 3); therefore their offering is displeasing in the highest degree. Ver. 15 is again resumed in ver. 18, where also the date is

ward, when yet stone was not laid on stone in the temple of Yahveh: 16. At the time one came to a corn-heap of twenty (measures), and there were ten; one came to the winefat to draw out fifty measures, and there were twenty. 17. I smote you with blasting and with mildew and with hail, all the labour of your hands; and you turned not to me, is Yahveh's oracle. 18. Lay now to heart from this day backward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth (month), as from the day when the temple of Yahveh was

stated.—ומעלה, properly = and upward, *i.e.* backward in time, when. . . . The stream of time is here viewed as flowing downward; differently 1 Sam. xvi. 13.—Ver. 16. Corresponds in contents and in antithetical form, descriptive of the illusion, to ch. i. 6, 9.—מן מהיותם in temporal sense, and that partitively: from their being = at the time when these days were.—One came to a corn-heap of twenty, which one estimated at twenty,—but in threshing it yielded only half. The usual measure must be supplied to the numbers; here, in keeping with the supposed size of such a heap, perhaps seah = a third of an ephah (see Comm. on Isa. v. 10).—פּוּרה, elsewhere "wine-press" (Isa. lxiii. 3), here a measure, probably as much as was pressed at one time. LXX, μετρητής, therefore = bath (on Isa. v. 10). Ver. 17. Like Amos iv. 9; even the ואין׳ has arisen from recollection of that refrain.—The second accusative, "all the labour of your hands," appositionally defines the first one more exactly; according to others, accus. of local reference: in all the labours. . . .—Instead of אֵינְכֶם the resolved form with אֶת, which here also does not express the nominative (Ges. § 117, 2), but accus. of the adverbial object, Böttcher, *Lehrbuch*, § 516*d*. Ver. 18. The present day, whose date is to be observed, is called the day when the *temple was founded*, or when they began to lay stone on stone (ver. 15). לְמִן joins on in like sense to the clauses with מִן; it is not meant to indicate the opposite term, *i.e.* the foundation day of the year 534 emphasised in Ezra iii. 10; cf. Introd. See, on the contrary, Zech. viii. 9.—לְמִן is synonymous with מִן and opposite of ועד (Hitz.). Even apart from Ezra iii., it may certainly seem strange that the time of uncleanness and displeasure is said to reach to this date, and here first the founding of the temple is spoken of; whereas work at the temple had been going on for three months according to i. 15

founded, lay to heart. 19. Is the corn yet in the barn? moreover the vine and the fig tree, and the pomegranate and the olive tree have not brought forth: from this day I will bless.

EXPOSITION.

Contents of ch. ii. 10–19. Third Discourse: Comforting Counsel respecting the results of the Temple-building. 1. A Double Question of Law, vv. 11–13; 2. Its Symbolic Application, vv. 14–19.

The fact that the prophet, on the day when the work of building began anew (which doubtless took place with certain solemnities), joins the promises, which according to the first discourse were to be then expected, to two rules of the ceremonial law, which he gets the priests to state, shows how general maxims bearing on the mutual relation of God and man underlie such definitions of the Torah; hence they apply to other relations than the Levitical. Here the principle comes to view that the attribute of impurity in God's sight in general, is transmitted further than the character of holiness, of consecration to the Lord. In the latter respect it is not enough to touch things with a holy skirt in order to hallow them. No fragmentary, self-willed service, such as was previously to be seen among them, would make them and their whole life holy and consecrated to God. Conversely, a high degree of Levitical impurity is transmitted to everything touched by one impure. So long as they are burdened with the guilt of disobedience and disloyalty in one important particular, their

But see on the latter passage. Ver. 19. Once again the unfortunate circumstances, due to the divine displeasure, are referred to, in order then in a sentence to point out the transition to blessing.—זרע, here as in Lev. xxvii. 30, corn in distinction from fruit.—Even already, before the middle of winter is reached, the corn is all stored in the barns.—*Pomegranate*, Joel i. 12.—לא נשא intelligible even without פרי. —*Bless*, used often of bestowing fertility; cf. Deut. xxviii. 8; Mal. iii. 10.

entire life and doings are utterly displeasing to God; in His sight they are as the unclean, who may not draw near to Him. On this day, this prophetic oracle begins to say, the threatening curse, resting on them because of the neglect of the building of the temple, is taken away from them. The blessed consequences of this will become just as visible and conspicuous as formerly the consequences of the divine displeasure had been.

Fourth Oracle: Divine Distinction of the Prince of David's House.

II. 20. And the word of Yahveh came the second time to Haggai on the four and twentieth (day) of the month, as follows: 21. Speak to Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, as follows: I will shake the heavens and the earth; 22. and will overturn the throne of the kingdoms, and destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and will overturn the chariots, and those that ride therein; and the horses and their riders shall fall down, every one by the sword of his comrade. 23. On that day, is the oracle of Yahveh of hosts,

Ver. 21. אני מ', futur. instans as in ver. 6. Ver. 22. The God-caused convulsions (ver. 21) will have for their effect the overthrow of powerful thrones and kingdoms.—כסא refers, not to a definite throne, in which the world-power would confront the people of God, but is as general as חזק. The armies of the heathen have their strength and pride especially in their dreaded chariots and cavalry (Ps. xx. 7; Zech. x. 5).—ירד, to go down, sink = נפל; cf. Isa. xxxii. 19.—*One by the sword of his brother*, comrade, fellow. God causes the heathen to destroy one another; cf. Judg. vii. 22; Ezek. xxxviii. 21, and elsewhere. Ver. 23. אקחך; לקח used without special emphasis to prepare for important actions which are to be undertaken on any object, Deut. iv. 20 and elsewhere.—My servant, an honourable epithet, especially of David; cf. in particular Ps. lxxviii. 70; 1 Kings xi. 13, 32, 34, etc.; Jer. xxxiii. 21 f., 26; also of the future David, Ezek. xxxiv. 23 f., xxxvii. 24 f. Hence Hitzig's distinction, to the effect that this is said about Zerubbabel, not as a descendant of David, but as the then ruler of the Jews, is

I will take thee, Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, my servant,—is Yahveh's oracle,—and set thee like a signet-ring: for I have chosen thee, is the oracle of Yahveh of hosts.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. ii. 20–23. Fourth Oracle: God's Distinction of the Prince of David's House.

As the promise of the third discourse applied to the whole land and people, so the prophet on the same auspicious day, when the building was begun anew, was permitted also to convey a gracious message of the Lord to his prince Zerubbabel. The impending catastrophe, ch. ii. 6, which is expounded ver. 21 f., more on its political side, will result in the exalting of Zerubbabel as well as in the glorifying of the temple. When all thrones are overturned and all armies fall, the Davidic throne will stand out all the more gloriously as chosen of God. Thus what is said in 2 Sam. vii. is in a sense repeated here. To the prince, anxious to honour the Lord by building His house, the Lord promises the greatest honour hereafter. This honour is briefly but significantly indicated by the symbol of the signet-ring. This expresses primarily the high esteem shown by carefully preserving anything in an honourable position as near as possible to the possessor. But the figure intimates, further, an intimate, personal relation of the Lord to that prince, as the signet-ring by bearing the initials of the possessor, who thus marks it as his, receives its ideal value, which is far greater than the real value. But von Hofmann extends this further than could occur to the mind of the prophet himself and his contemporaries, when he

quite without warrant. On the contrary, the throne of David stands here plainly in contrast with the sinking world-empires (ver. 22).—שׂים, used so absolutely, not: to put on, wear, but to place, make into something; cf. for the rest Cant. viii. 6; Jer. xxii. 24; Eccles. xvii. 17, xlix. 11.

interprets the words thus: "This not merely means, that he will preserve him or hold him in honour like a signet-ring, but that He will give him the place of a signet-ring and use him as one . . . in the sense that only *that* and all *that* has existence and value before God, which has the seal of His acknowledgment and the stamp of His approval, by being submitted to Zerubbabel" (*Schriftbeweis*, ii. 2, p. 600). Only the fulfilment could bring out such a range of meaning in this mysteriously indefinite, but certainly from the first astonishingly magnificent, oracle. That this promise is attached to Zerubbabel's person, with which Ezek. xvii. 22 f. should be compared, is to be estimated in the same way as Haggai's statement about the world-embracing significance of the temple now to be built. Here also a step in advance is seen in Zechariah, in that he expressly distinguishes between the present bearer of office and the future Messiah. Haggai keeps to the present prince, but to him as the representative of the Davidic race and heir of the "unchangeable mercies of David" (Isa. lv. 3),—certainly not without a consciousness that he was but an imperfect representative of that divine kingdom, which should attain perfect form in Israel in the person of a scion of David. The circumstance, that the two genealogies of Jesus contain the name Zerubbabel, points to the true fulfilment, Mark i. 12 f.; Luke iii. 27.

ZECHARIAH.

Introduction.

I. Zechariah, chs. i.–viii.

Zechariah (זְכַרְיָה = זָכַר יי, he whom Yahveh remembers, a common name; LXX: *Ζαχαρίας*; Vulg.: Zacharias), contemporary of Haggai, according to Ezra v. 1, vi. 14, in common with the latter promoted the building of the temple, which is confirmed by his prophecies contained in the first part of the book (chs. i.–viii.). In the passages of Ezra just referred to he is simply called בר־עדוא, whereas the present heading and i. 7 make him appear as son of Berechiah and grandson of Iddo. It has indeed been suggested that בן־ברכיה in the present book is a later addition; this has been most acutely defended by Bleek (*Altt. Einl.;* cf. *Theol. Stud. u. Krit.* 1852, p. 310 ff.), who thinks that the author of chs. ix.–xi. was Zechariah, son of Jeberechiah (mentioned Isa. viii. 2); but the compiler, who identified the two, transferred this בן ברכיה from the heading of ch. ix. and combined it with בן עדו. Similarly Knobel, Ortenberg. But this explanation has little probability. Rather the not uncommon circumstance may be assumed (cf. Gen. xxix. 5; 2 Kings ix. 20), that in the Ezra passages the prophet is named after the well-known grandfather, his father being passed by, perhaps, for the very purpose of avoiding any confusion with the Zechariah mentioned in Isa. viii. 2; perhaps, also, because the father had died early. As the Zechariah and Iddo mentioned in Neh. xii. 4, 16 are also to

be regarded as identical with the men in question here, it is clear from that chapter that they belonged to a priestly family; and also that Iddo, the grandfather of Zechariah, returned from exile with Zerubbabel, and was the head of a priestly house, in which dignity he was followed by Zechariah, who must himself have been still young at the time of his prophetic appearance, as his grandfather was still living after the return from exile. Of his life we know nothing in detail, and just as little of his death; as what is said in Matt. xxiii. 35 of the murder of a Zechariah, son of Berechiah, cannot apply to our prophet, of whose violent death there is no hint, but must be referred to Zechariah, son of Jehoiadah, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20 ff.

The time, circumstances, and occasion of the appearance of Zechariah were much the same as in Haggai's case (see there). Zechariah's oracles, also, belong mostly to the second year of Darius (520 B.C.), when the united efforts of the two prophets succeeded in again setting on foot the work of temple-building. The last oracles of Zechariah preserved to us bear a date only later by two years (vii. 1)—fourth year of Darius (518 B.C.). The purpose of his prophecies is also the same as in Haggai. They are meant to encourage to that work, and to inspire confidence in the future of the nation and of God's kingdom. But the contents are richer, as well as the form. The latter consists, in great part, of visions. In chs. i. 7–vi. visions in the proper sense of the word, imparted to the prophet, are related, *i.e.* sensuous pictures of high spiritual significance which a higher power placed before his soul, and over against which he stood at first as recipient, until, by the help of the divine word, he gradually saw their significance. It ought not to be asserted that this form of vision sprang from foreign (Persian, Babylonian?) influences. It is found already in Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah. On the other hand, the influence of foreign elements is seen in the awkward style of Zechariah, and in the use of the Chaldæan names

of the months. The language is pretty free from Aramaisms.

The obscurity of the visions was complained of in early days (Jerome, *et al.*), and has been blamed in modern days. Yet the nature of a vision implies that, like a parable, it leaves something to reflection; and does not express itself in simple thoughts, but gives scope for the play of imagination. The main thoughts are clear; and the complaint of Jerome is just as exaggerated as the criticism of de Wette, to the effect that the symbolism of the prophet shows no inventive genius, is unwarranted. To contemporaries the pictures—simple, yet grand and stately in form—must have appeared still plainer and richer in meaning. They are, to some extent, of poetical beauty; but always appropriate to the lofty subject which they seek to set forth. The theological gain is not slight.

After a preliminary exhortation to repentance (i. 1–6), there follows, in i. 7–ch. vi., an account of seven visions which Zechariah saw in one night, and to which shorter or longer oracles are attached. The purpose of the pictures and words is, in general, a consolatory one. The punishment of the heathen nations that despise Israel's God is imminent (i. 8 ff., ii. 1 ff., vi. 1 ff.); Jerusalem, lying in abasement, will, by God's grace, rise to a height of prosperity and power never before reached or dreamt of when Yahveh comes to dwell therein (i. 13 ff., ii. 5 ff.). The priesthood there has a glorious future, and expects a wondrous consummation in the days of the Messiah, when God shall establish perfect reconciliation between Himself and His people (ch. iii.). Side by side with the priesthood, in God's sight, stands the sacred monarchy; both together convey perpetually God's Spirit to the Church, so that, like the candlestick in the temple, it makes its light shine to His glory (ch. iv.). First, of course, the land must be cleansed from its sins (false swearing, sins of trade!), ch. v.

The conclusion is a symbolical action enjoined on the

prophet, representing the union of the high-priestly with the regal dignity in the Messiah's person.

A longer discourse of the prophet is preserved from the fourth year of Darius (chs. vii., viii.), which he delivered on occasion of an inquiry, in the days of Jerusalem's misfortune, concerning the necessity of fasting, and in which he sheds light on the conditions of a favourable turn in the fortunes of the city. If only the inhabitants of city and country will not fail in keeping the God-commanded duties to neighbours (vii. 9 f., viii. 16 f.), as already required by the early prophets, God fully intends to turn their fast-days into feast-days, and to make Jerusalem the much-frequented centre of the earth, and the channel of salvation to all nations.

II. ZECHARIAH, CHS. IX.–XIV.

While the authorship of the Zechariah named in the heading, and the contemporary of Zerubbabel, in regard to chs. i.–viii. is acknowledged without question on the part of criticism, strong objection has been raised for a century past against ascribing chs. ix.–xiv. to the same period and the same author. The first impulse to such doubts was given by the citation in Matt. xxvii. 9 f., by which passage the Englishman Joseph Mede felt himself compelled to ascribe Zech. ix.–xii. to Jeremiah; so with the Englishmen Hammond, Kidder, Whiston, *et al.* The proper critical attempts, however, begin only in 1784, when the Hamburg preacher Flügge published his anonymous treatise, in which he referred chs. ix.–xiv. to pre-exilic days, but split them up into nine fragments of different dates. Less arbitrary were the contemporary proposals of Bishop W. Newcome, who in 1785 published a commentary on the Minor Prophets, in which he also made Zech. ix.–xiv. arise in pre-exilic days—chs. ix.–xi. before the fall of the kingdom of Ephraim, chs. xii.–xiv. in the time between Josiah's death and the overthrow of Jerusalem. This

hypothesis, in its main features, has found most acceptance with critics down to recent days. In his wake, in addition to the pre-exilic origin, the twofold division was accepted (with exception, *e.g.*, of Rosenmüller, who supposed but one author in the time of Uzziah), chs. ix.–xi. being generally placed in the Isaianic age, chs. xii.–xiv. in the days of Jeremiah. So, with deviations in details, Bertholdt (*Introd.*), Knobel, Ewald, v. Ortenberg, Bleek, E. Meier, Diestel, Schrader, Steiner, *et al.* Hitzig, Reuss, in the case of chs. xii.–xiv., rather suggest Manasseh's days. Over against this entire group stands another, which transfers chs. ix.–xiv. to late post-exilic, post-Zecharian days. So Eichhorn, who, after long vacillation (*Introd.*, ed. 4), assigned these pieces to different epochs of the Greek-Maccabæan period (332 B.C. to 161 B.C.). So also Corrodi, H. E. G. Paulus, Böttcher (*Neue Ährenlese*, ii. 216). Vatke does not come quite so far down (fifth century). On the other hand, B. Stade has recently sought, in lengthy investigations, to show that the entire Second Part of Zechariah (chs. ix.–xiv.) is the work of one author writing in the first decades of the third century B.C. Still, also, the unity of composition of the entire book, according to the traditional view, is defended by eminent advocates of different schools. So by M. J. H. Beckhaus (*Integrität der proph. Schriften*, 1796), Jahn (*Einl.*), F. B. Köster, Hengstenberg, de Wette (*Einl.*, ed. 4, whereas in ed. 1–3 he accepted pre-exilic origin), Stähelin, Hävernick, Umbreit, Hofmann, Köhler, Burger, Keil, Kliefoth, Lange, Bredenkamp, C. H. H. Wright, *et al.*

Against the unity of the author, and of the date of the entire book, criticism alleges—*a*. The great diversity of literary form and manner existing generally between Parts I. (chs. i.–viii.) and II. (chs. ix.–xiv.). This is not to be denied, although it would be a mistake to let this formal element alone decide. In Part II. are wanting those careful headings, with indication of author and date, which are found in

Zech. i. and Haggai. Chs. ix. 1, xii. 1, have a different character, apart from the fact that their origin is doubtful (cf. on xii. 1). The style in Parts I. and II. is very different, both as relates to the phraseology in particular, and the tenor of discourse generally. Common phrases (such as עבר וישב, vii. 14 and ix. 8) cannot be cited as between other prophetic writings. The peculiar expressions of Part I. (cf. a catalogue of these in Köhler, ii. 27) are not found in Part II., and conversely (cf. *ibid.* iii. 303 f.), which certainly, as Köhler rightly points out, is closely connected with the diversity of contents. The different tenor of the whole is of still greater importance. Whereas Zech. i., in the visions, indeed, presents an abundance, even in an æsthetic aspect, of noble, lofty figures, but elsewhere offers a somewhat awkward, prosaic style; Part II., on the other hand, where visions proper do not occur, exhibits in the discourses a spirit and a fire of enthusiasm, such as one meets with elsewhere only in early prophetic writings, but there all the oftener.—*b.* As to contents, the circle of thought is also quite different in the two parts of the book, and where passages of similar sound occur (*e.g.* ii. 14 and ix. 9) they stand, looked at closely, in an essentially different connection inwardly. However, this, too, cannot be conclusive against the unity of the author, as, *e.g.*, we cannot demand that Zechariah, in his later discourses, should use again the entire angelology of the visionary part, the figure of Satan, the seven eyes of God, etc.—*c.* A much more important point is, that the outward historical and political situation, presupposed in chs. ix.–xiv., is not that of the age of Zerubbabel. In the First Part, among the heathen nations hostile to God's people, Babylon is prominent, and almost alone comes into view; on the other hand, in chs. ix.–xi., Syrians, Phœnicians, Philistines appear; then as great powers, swallowing up the nation, Assyria and Egypt, finally Javan in the distance. The single cities of the Syrians, Phœnicians, and Philistines still enjoy a certain independence; Gaza, at

any rate, still has its own king (ix. 3). In Zerubbabel's time these countries (with the exception of Egypt) scarcely any longer come into serious account as political powers. That the heathen powers in question were only named in virtue of an "archaic schematism," as traditional types of the foes of God's kingdom, is little probable, in view of the inartificial vividness of these oracles.—*d.* As relates to the circumstances of Israel in chs. ix.–xi., captives of the nation are found in foreign lands (ix. 11 f.); but a more general exile is still to come (x. 2, 9); the temple at Jerusalem is still standing (xi. 13), despite ix. 8, which glances back, not at a destruction, but at the various levyings of tribute that had occurred. Nay, even Ephraim has not gone into exile. This northern kingdom is not only often mentioned (as, in any case, in viii. 13), but is presupposed as a still existing power (ix. 10, 13, x. 6 f., xi. 7, 14). In distinction from this, chs. xii.–xiv. certainly are occupied with Judah-Jerusalem, which is severely threatened.—*e.* The chief moral and religious faults, presupposed in Part II., are pre-exilic. This part still contends chiefly against idolatry (x. 2), and regards the extirpation of the false prophets as yet future; their number must still have been great at the time when Zech. xiii. 2–6 was written. On the other hand, in ch. v. nothing is heard of these pollutions of the land. Generally speaking, after the exile there is no complaint about idolatry, and little about false prophets; cf., at all events, Neh. vi. 14; the *incantatores*, Mal. iii. 5, are of a different kind. The explanation that by idolatry is understood that which is opposed to God's will, is again too artificial.

The elements adduced under *c.* and *d.* seem to us especially to be decisive for diversity of age and author; and, at the same time, many of the points dwelt on are strongly in favour of the pre-exilic origin of the Second Part.

To be more definite, it seems right to see in Zech. ix.–xi. a prophecy of a later contemporary of Hosea. The northern

kingdom still stands, but it is threatened with an invasion of the Assyrians from the north-east (xi. 1 f.), and exile in Assyria and Egypt (x. 9 f.; cf. Hos. xi. 11). The prophet who, in ch. xi., appears as a shepherd of the nation in God's stead, even seems to have worked in the northern kingdom, perhaps a Judæan like Amos (cf. on xi. 13), who, during the last tumults which, after the decease of Jeroboam II., preceded the destruction of that kingdom, had to discharge the desperate mission of again joining the country to Judah, and saving it from destruction,—an attempt which, after he had acquired influence for a short time, at least with a portion of the community, failed for want of deeper insight and good disposition even on the part of the more receptive (see on xi. 4 ff.). If this date of the oracles is the right one, the description of the Messianic king, ix. 9, forms a transition from the more general promises of Hosea to the more definite ones of Isaiah.

In Zech. xii.–xiv., on the other hand, the scenery is notably different. Ephraim is no longer thought of. Jerusalem is severely threatened by the enemy, and will also, according to xiv. 1 f., first succumb to him; but not for ever, as, on the contrary, it is destined to survive all attacks of the heathen, and, as the holy city of God, to triumph over them. The period from the death of Josiah at Megiddo (xii. 11) to the fall of Jerusalem suggests itself as the date of origin, therefore the time of Jeremiah. That this unnamed prophet at Jerusalem belonged, on account of xii. 1 ff., to the body of prophets opposed to Jeremiah, who held out vain hopes to the citizens, would be a perverse conclusion, as he by no means regards Jerusalem as impregnable; but, on the contrary, in xiv. 1 f. announces its capture, xii. 1 ff. consequently speaking of a more remote future. Also, like Jeremiah, he finds himself in utter opposition to the vagrant prophets (xiii. 2 ff.).

The often attempted proof of the unmistakeable literary dependence of these two sections on the last pre-exilic

prophets has not been established. Doubtless, if Joel were late post-exilic, the section, Zech. xii.–xiv., which is plainly dependent on him, would have to be placed still later; see, however, Introd. to Joel. What, on the other hand, has recently been alleged, especially by Stade, to establish the dependence of these chapters (ix.–xiv.) on Jeremiah, Ezekiel, etc., rests on subjective combination, and leads to the unsatisfactory conclusion that the author of these pieces was no prophet, but a scribe, who patched together an "eschatological compendium" out of earlier prophecies. For this, however, his oracles, differing so widely from their supposed bases, are too original. The mention of Javan, also, does not compel us to come down to the Greek period (third century), as little as Joel iv. 6, which passage explains its mention in Zech. ix. 13. This late period, recommended by Stade, has against it, apart from the fact that the second part of the Canon was then certainly closed, the circumstance that there the historical and political conditions for these oracles are wanting. To understand by Egypt and Assyria the Ptolemæan and Seleucid kingdom is very bold. That the latter would scarcely be described by Assyria in this age, see Köhler in Herzog, xiii. p. 182. In the same way, the explanation of the house of David and the house of Levi, in ch. xii. (at end) of the Jerusalem nobles and priests, who are said to have sat together in a court and condemned an innocent man to death, is foreign to the text. But especially in that period is the ground wanting for the entire appearance of the prophet (not scribe!) in God's stead, as is related in xi. 4 ff. The dilution of this vivid delineation into a "rhetorical turn" (Stade, i. 26), is much like a renouncing of explanation. In the same way, the interpretation of the three shepherds (xi. 8) as heathen powers, especially the three empires of the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians (Stade, i. 71), which dissolved one the other, only shows the impossibility of getting a meaning out of the words suitable to that

period. No better is the desperate explanation of xi. 14: The people ridiculed the future (!) reunion of Israel and Judah, as well as the Messianic hopes attached thereto, of which the author prophesied in chs. ix., x. (Stade, i. 28)!

Little as, in face of the wide discrepancy in the results of criticism, we can reasonably consider the question as settled, we, meanwhile, see no more acceptable historical position for these sections than the one advocated above. In Zech. ii. as in Isa. xl.–lxvi., we have to do with prophecies which are not expressly ascribed to any prophet. Hence the controversy turns, not on the genuineness, but only on the correctness of the traditional view respecting the composition, and does not lessen the intrinsic value of these oracles. If we are asked how the tradition which we regard as erroneous could be formed, or how these prophecies could be added to Zechariah's book, it is conceivable that they stood anonymously at the close of the Minor Prophets, and afterwards, when Malachi was added, lost their independence and were joined to Zechariah. (So also Strack, *Handwörterb.*, 2 ed. i. 174 f. = 3 ed. i. 255.) The similarity of the passages, ii. 14 and ix. 9, might contribute to the supposition of a Zecharian origin, as also xi. 17 and xiii. 7, in Part II., invited to the combination. Because of the commonness of the name Zechariah, two authors of the same name have been suggested, and therewith in reference to chs. ix.–xi. the Zechariah mentioned in Isa. viii. 2, who even had a father of the same name as the post-exilic Zechariah. See the further hypothesis at the beginning of this Introduction.

Recent literature on Zechariah specifically: M. Baumgarten, *Die Nachtgesichte Sacharjas*, 2 Bde., Braunschw. 1854–55 (on chs. i.–vi., from realistic standpoint, with practical aim, well done in particular parts). W. Neumann, *Die Weissagungen des Sakharjah*, Stuttg. 1860 (little objective, occasionally suggestive, often fantastic). August. Köhler, *Die Weissagungen Sach.*, 2 Bde., Erlangen 1861–63 (distinguished by

completeness and moderation, the most probable on the situation; cf. also his article "Sacharja" in Herzog). Th. Kliefoth, *Der Proph. Sach.*, Schwerin 1862. C. J. Bredenkamp, *Der Proph. Sach.*, Erlangen 1879. C. H. H. Wright, *Zechariah and his Prophecies*, London 1879. W. H. Lowe, *The Hebrew Student's Commentary on Zechariah*, London, 1882.—On the critical question concerning Zech. ix.–xiv.: B. G. Flügge, *Die Weissagungen, welche den Schriften des Proph. Zacharias beigebogen sind*, Goetting. 1818. Hengstenberg, *Die Authentie des Daniel u. die Integrität des Sacharja*, Berlin 1831. J. D. F. Burger, *Études sur le proph. Zacharie*, Strassburg 1841. V. Ortenberg, *Die Bestandtheile des B. Sacharja*, Gotha 1859. B. Stade, "Deuterozacharja," in *Zeitschr. f. alttest. Wissensch.* i. 1 ff.; ii. 151 ff., 275 ff.

First Discourse of Zechariah: Repent! i. 1–6.

I. 1. In the eighth month, in the second year of Darius, came the word of Yahveh to Zechariah, son of Berechiah, son of Iddo, the prophet, as follows: 2. Yahveh was exceedingly wroth with your fathers. 3. Thus therefore shalt thou say to them: Thus says Yahveh of hosts, Return to me, is the

Chapter I.

Ver. 1. *In the eighth month*, called formerly Bul, in post-exilic days Marcheswan, answering for the most part to November. Contrary to custom the day is not stated; in view of the indefinite expression (Hag. i. 1 different) it is not probable that the new moon is meant.—This date falls between the time of the second and the third discourse of Haggai.—On the *second year of Darius*, see Introd. to Haggai.—On the person and descent of Zechariah, see Introd. Ver. 2 ff. The style here is similar in emphasis to Haggai. Cf. the often repeated יהוה צבאות. Ver. 3. שוב, on man's side of turning to God, N. T. μετάνοια, is not to be limited to the work of temple-building, for which they were already prepared. They are to turn from aversion to God in general. Then will God again turn in mercy to them. Cf. 2 Chron. xxx. 6; Jas. iv. 8.

oracle of Yahveh of hosts, and I will return to you, says Yahveh of hosts. 4. Be not like your fathers, to whom the former prophets cried thus: "Thus says Yahveh of hosts, Turn now from your evil ways, and your evil deeds:" but they heard not and hearkened not to me, is Yahveh's oracle. 5. Your fathers, where are they? and can the prophets live for ever? 6. But my words and my decrees, with which I entrusted my servants the prophets, did they not overtake your fathers, that they turned and said: Like as Yahveh of hosts thought to do to us, according to our ways and our deeds, so he dealt with us?

Exposition.

Contents of ch. i. 1–6. Lay to heart the fate of your fathers and repent!

Zechariah also opens his prophecies with a call to repent. Let the present generation hear him and not act like its fathers, who were smitten with the penalty of exile, because they were always deaf to the exhortations to repentance!

Ver. 4. The *fathers* are the pre-exilic generation, the *former* prophets the pre-exilic, whose preaching of repentance remained without effect, on which account the exile came of necessity. The words put into their mouth especially recall Jeremiah; cf. Jer. iii. 6–iv. 4, vii. 3, 5, xviii. 11, xxvi. 13, etc., and also Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Kethib מֵעֲלִילֵיכֶם from עלילה, of which elsewhere the plur. as in Zeph. iii. 7. Keri has the usual מַעַלְלֵיכֶם (as in ver. 6) from מַעֲלָל; also from the stem עלל. Ver. 5. *Your fathers, where are they?* not triumphantly, as in Jer. xxxvii. 19, but according to the next clause: Would they were here; but they can no longer come to tell how they fared. Even *those prophets* died like other men: they can no longer show how their threatenings were fulfilled. Ver. 6. אך, limiting, alludes to the certainly obvious state of things. The *words* of Yahveh are, according to the context, threatening (Jer. xxxix. 16), His decrees (חקי), judicial decisions (Zeph. ii. 2).—*Overtaken.* The divine threats form a pursuing force, which finally overtakes the sinner.—*As Yahveh* (according to His words) *thought* to do to us, alludes to Lam. ii. 17. The prayer of Dan. ix. 4 ff. also is in the mind of such penitent

In this preliminary saying the prophet shows himself anxious to preserve to his generation the fruit of a hundred years' experience. The fathers, indeed, were brought to reflection by punishment; but they are no longer present to bear witness to the gravity of God's words, and so the lessons which they learned by grievous experience might easily be lost to the present generation. That in point of fact heathen practices were abandoned in the exile, as the people were taught wisdom by suffering, is shown in general by the spirit and bearing of the people during that time, and especially by its progress in post-exilic days. But it was due to the labours of the post-exilic prophets that the restored generation, which soon showed a strong leaning to worldliness, was preserved from falling back into its old ways.

Zechariah's Night-Visions, i. 7–Ch. vi.

1. *The Divine Company of Horsemen,* i. 7–17.

7. On the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month, which is the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius, came the word of Yahveh to Zechariah, son of Berechiah, son of Iddo, as follows: 8. I saw in the night, and beheld a man riding on a red horse, who kept among the myrtle-trees, which are in the hollow: and behind him red, bay, and white horses.

exiles. Ver. 7. This date falls exactly two months later than the last oracles of Haggai. The month *Shebat* answers about to our February. Ver. 8. *In that night*, the night from the 23rd to the 24th, as the Hebrew makes the day begin with sunset. The *word of Yahveh*, ver. 7, general statement of divine revelation, as no words of God follow immediately in ver. 8.—*I saw*, prophetically, I received divine visions. These words, like those of ver. 7, apply to all visions up to vi. 8, which accordingly belong to one night.—והנה introduces the first thing he saw.—במצלה (without dagesh in the ל; so not from צלל, but = מְצוּלָה, Micah vii. 19), *in the hollow*, applies to a locality in the immediate neighbourhood of the temple, then known under this name, one of the ravines at the foot

9. Then I said, What are these, my Lord? Then the angel who spake with me said to me: I will show thee what these are. 10. Then the man who kept among the myrtles began and said: These are they whom Yahveh sent to go to and fro in the earth. 11. And they answered the angel of Yahveh who kept among the myrtles, and said: We have gone to and fro in the earth, and, behold, the whole earth lies

of the temple-hill, as in vi. 1, whence the chariots start. According to this passage LXX here and ver. 10 f. ההרים instead of ההדסים, which, however, is to be rejected.—*Horses*, of course with riders.—אדם, red, frequently used of blood or red wine, but also of lentils, Gen. xxv. 30; so also reddish-brown, *brown*; so commonly, if of horses.—שָׂרֹק (here only apart from Isa. xvi. 8) bright red, *sorrel*, of horses (like Arabic *aschkaru*), tail and mane also red. Instead of this, LXX ψαροὶ καὶ ποικίλοι, ashen grey and speckled. Accordingly, Ewald so supplements the text as to make four colours, as in vi. 2 ff. But there also the colours are different, and in vi. 3 one colour is expressed in LXX by these two adjectives. Ver. 9. In regard to the question, see on Amos vii. 8.—By אדני, not אדנָי, he addresses an *angel*, plainly distinguished in his eyes from God; this angel speaks to him (דבר בְּ, see on Hos. i. 2), and is the medium of the revelations he receives (ver. 13, ii. 7, iv. 1 ff.). *I will show thee*, the further course of the visions will show thee. Ver. 10. The leader of the horsemen is also their spokesman. He announces them before the dwelling of God as those who were sent forth to traverse the earth. התהלך, with the purpose of exploring, reconnoitring, as in Job ii. 2. Ver. 11. The *angel of Yahveh* is shown by the clause העמד בין ההדסים to be identical with the leader of the horsemen. The discovery of ver. 10 makes clear that all the horsemen are divine messengers, *i.e.* angels: but in this case their leader must be מלאך יי κατ' ἐξ., in whom God is manifested most directly, and by whose mission He has again and again distinguished His people: cf. Ex. xiv. 19; Josh. v. 13 ff., *et al.*—They answer (ענה), like the choir to the choragus, announcing the result of their mission. In vv. 12, 13 also ענה applies to a discourse which is not properly an answer to the one who has just spoken. In no case is the "angel of Yahveh" identical with the *angelus interpres* (against Hitz., Ew.). Rather one may, with Köhler, Hofmann, Baumg., Keil, *et al.*, distinguish the angel of Yahveh from the leader of the

at rest and still.—12. Then the angel of Yahveh answered and said: O Yahveh of hosts, how long yet wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with which thou hast been wroth now seventy years? 13. Then Yahveh answered the angel who spake with me good words, comforting words. 14. Then the angel who spake with me said to me: Cry thus, Thus has Yahveh of hosts said: I burn for Jerusalem and for Zion with great zeal; 15. and I am exceeding angry against the careless heathen: because when I was a little wroth, they helped on the evil. 16. Therefore thus says Yahveh: I turn again to Jerusalem in mercy: my

horsemen also, and contrast him with the latter, which, however, is scarcely permitted by the twice-used, exactly similar clause, "who stood among the myrtles." For the identity of these two Drus., Rosenmüller, Umbreit, Hengst., Neum., Bredenk. *et al.* also.—ישב, to lie peacefully, cf. Micah v. 3. Ver. 12. זעם with accus. as in Isa. lxvi. 14; Mal. i. 4.—Seventy years, emphasised with reference to Jer. xxv. 11, xxix. 10. There certainly the starting-point and end are different from here (see on Jer.), where plainly the final conquest by Nebuchadnezzar, having the overthrow of the city and *temple* for its consequence, is regarded as the beginning of the seventy years' *desolation*. Since then almost seven years have now elapsed. Ver. 13. God's answer to the complaining question is imparted to the *angelus interpres*, because designed for the prophet. The latter perceives at once that they are words of comfort, but cannot understand the purport until the angel imparts them to him, ver. 14. Cf. also Jer. xxix. 10 on the *good*, salutary words.—נִחֻמִים (to be read without dagesh), properly consolations, as in Isa. lvii. 18, therefore in apposition: words which are consolations, comforting things. Ver. 14. קרא = κηρύσσειν, as in i. 4. קנא in Joel ii. 18. Ver. 15. אשר = *quod*, ὅτι.—מעט, applying, not to the time, but the degree of the anger. The wrath of Yahveh against His people was still only moderate; they acted wilfully, and did more than He commanded them. Thus through their fault the retributive suffering was greater than it should have been according to the measure of God's anger. Thus the heathen, instead of acting merely as instruments of God's judgments, went much further of their own will; as to the matter, cf. Isa. xlvii. 6. Ver. 16. לכן, on account of the present injustice.—קָוֶה, the unusual form replaced in Keri by the later usual mono-

house shall be built in it, is the oracle of Yahveh of hosts and the measuring line shall be stretched out over Jerusalem. 17. Cry again thus: Thus has Yahveh of hosts said, My cities shall yet overflow with good; and Yahveh will again show compassion to Zion, and again choose Jerusalem.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. i. 7–17. First Vision: The Divine Band of Horsemen. 1. Introduction to all the visions, ver. 7; 2. Announcement respecting the state of the earth, vv. 8–11; 3. Comforting prospects, vv. 12–17.

The visions, of which the prophet saw an entire cycle in one memorable night, are no dreams, still less figurative coverings, invented by himself, of his own thoughts, but genuine prophetic visions. These being imparted to him by night, is the consequence of the night being more favourable for still contemplation than the busy day with its distractions. The visions, which follow here, have in general a comforting, hortatory purpose. They are meant to encourage Yahveh's faithful ones to willing endurance and earnest furtherance of the work of the Lord, by assuring them of the blessed future of that kingdom of God which grows out of such slight beginnings.

The first vision, i. 7–17, brings before us an animated scene transacted before the eyes of the seer at the foot of the

syllabic form (קוֹ), as in the kindred passage, Jer. xxxi. 39. The measuring-line stretched over Jerusalem, *i.e.* its extent is marked out for rebuilding. The figure is again surpassed by ver. 17, and especially by ii. 5 ff. Ver. 17. עוֹד, thrice the return of the best, golden age of Jerusalem is emphatically promised.—פּוּץ (read תְּפוּצֶינָה without dagesh in נ), to spread, scatter; here of the wealth of good things, which the city walls are unable to contain; cf. ii. 8.—נחם, on account of the accus. to be regarded as Piel, but here has same meaning as Niph., not exactly to comfort, but to sympathise.—*To choose*, as in ii. 16, iii. 2. God had first chosen Jerusalem under David, 2 Kings xxi. 7; 2 Chron. vi. 5.

temple-hill. As appears also from Hag. ii. 6–9, 21, no restoration of Jerusalem, its temple and monarchy, worthy of the old prophetic oracles, could be conceived otherwise than as connected with mighty convulsions. The sluggish calm of the inhabitants of earth, who cared little for Yahveh's dwelling, lay therefore like an Alp on the soul of His zealous servants. What Zechariah here says is the first lightning-flash of the divine wrath against this careless world, which is hostile to His people, or at least indifferent to His cause. The horses which he sees assembling from all sides before the dwelling of Yahveh, which is conceived to be on earth, are not post-horses (so the majority of modern writers, with allusion to the Persian imperial post, Herod. viii. 98, iii. 126; Xen. *Cyrop.* viii. 6. 17), but war-horses; those who ride on them are the Lord's diverse war-host, which He has sent forth to make a survey of the scene of their future operations. Their going about the whole earth has not, indeed, God's plagues, war, etc., for its immediate consequence (as in Rev. vi.); but is a preparation for attacking the world, of which they meanwhile report that it lies in careless security. Even the colour of their horses is menacing, as their leader rides one of the colour of blood, and red is predominant. The bright red may point to fire; the white, which appears last, is the colour of victory and triumph. That the angel of the Lord Himself,—for as such the leader appears,—who in the old days of the wars of Yahveh led the celestial and earthly hosts to victory over the heathen, has already mounted his blood-red steed, is a sign of the near outbreak of the Lord's judgments, which are to save His people. Moreover, from the lips of this angel the prophet hears eloquent complaint of the long subjection of Israel, and receives through his angel, who communicates to him the revelation subjectively (whereas the angel of Yahveh presents them objectively), the comforting, positive assurances, vv. 16, 17, which are really the end aimed at. According to these,

Jerusalem shall remain the city of God, which the Lord of heaven and earth has chosen for His seat, and will be seen with its temple in a form, even in outward appearance, worthy of this high distinction.

2. *Four Horns and Four Smiths,* ii. 1–4.

II. 1. Then I lifted up mine eyes and saw, and behold fours *horns!* 2. Then I said to the angel who spake with me, What mean these? Then he said to me: These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. 3. Then Yahveh showed me four *smiths.* 4. Then I said, What come these to do? Then he said as follows: These are the horns which scattered Judah, so that no man could lift up his head; these then are come to terrify them, in order to cast down the horns of the heathen, which have lifted up the horn against the land of Judah to scatter it.

Chapter II.

Ver. 1. The *lifting up of the eyes* introduces a new vision (as in ii. 5, v. 1, vi. 1; Dan. viii. 3, x. 5), but following closely in time on the first.—*Horns,* symbol of power; cf. Amos vi. 13; Jer. xlviii. 25, *et al.* These horns, indeed, are viewed in concrete form; but as they are used symbolically, a political character may at once be ascribed to them in ver. 2. That the seer beheld them planted on heads of animals, is not to be supposed, because there is no intimation of it. Ver. 2. *Israel,* without ו after *Judah,* is not to be understood of the Ephraimite kingdom, but of entire Israel. Last, its centre, *Jerusalem,* is named, in whose destruction the arrogance of the heathen culminates. Ver. 3. *Smiths* = חָרָשִׁים (Isa. xliv. 12), as the horns were perhaps of iron (cf. Micah iv. 13). LXX differently: carpenters. Ver. 4. As the smiths come with all their tools, Zechariah asks their purpose.—כִּבְיָ, properly, in keeping with the way that none. . . .—*To frighten* them out of their confident rest and reliance on their own strength (cf. i. 15). The phrase does not so well suit the horns as the heathen, who are meant by אוֹתָם.—נָשָׂא קֶרֶן (stronger than נָשָׂא רֹאשׁ) implies presumption (cf. Ps. lxxv. 5 f.) and (with אֶל) also hostility.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. ii. 1–4. Second Vision: Four Horns and Four Smiths.

The first vision contained both threats of judgment against the self-conscious heathen and promise to the subjugated people of God. These two aspects of the first vision now take shape in two independent visions, ch. ii. 1–4 exhibiting to the seer the judgment on the world-powers, ch. ii. 5 ff. the benefits of God to Israel. The number of the horns—four—is to be explained substantially as in Ezek. i. The entirety of the world-powers is meant to be set forth exhaustively. Four successive empires, which have done violence to Judah in the past, are not to be seen, and are also not to be sought. In distinction from Daniel, Zechariah is fond of a simultaneous survey, not the presenting of a succession. Still less are the four smiths to be interpreted of four historical personalities. Their acts only are asked about; who they are, is indifferent. The main thought accordingly is: From whatever side a world-power rises against the authority of Yahveh and His people, it will find its master in a stronger one, whom God has already appointed against it.

3. *The Glorious Upbuilding of Jerusalem*, ii. 5–17.

II. 5. Then I lifted up mine eyes and saw, and behold: A man who had a measuring line in his hand! 6. Then I said, Whither goest thou? And he said to me: To measure Jerusalem in order to see how great its breadth and how great

Ver. 5. A *man*, indefinite introduction, as in i. 8. The angels appearing in the vision are first so named according to their appearance. Ver. 6. The prophet then also does not hesitate to address them as they pass by.—*To measure Jerusalem*, thus to begin the realisation of i. 16.—*To see* how great . . . *i.e.* how much it still lacks of the right measure. There is not the least suggestion here of the rebuilding of the still ruined city-walls.

its length. 7. And behold, the angel who spake with me, went forth, and another angel went out to meet him. 8. Then he said to him, Run, speak to the young man there thus: Jerusalem shall lie wide open for the multitude of men and cattle within it. 9. But I will be to it, is Yahveh's oracle, a wall of fire round about, and I will be the glory in its midst. 10. Alas, alas, flee ye then from the land of the north, is Yahveh's oracle; yet have I scattered you to the four winds of heaven, is Yahveh's oracle. 11. Alas, Zion, save thyself, who dwellest with the daughter of Babylon! 12. For thus

Ver. 7. After the first has departed, the *angelus interpres* also comes into view (יצא, *prodibat*), comes on the stage, so to speak. And indeed the context shows that he comes from God, where he has received a new message, which again surpasses the revelation received in i. 13–17. He is sent to the prophet, but delivers the charge (ver. 8) to an angel whom he meets (ver. 7*b*), on which occasion the prophet learns the new message. Ver. 8. *To that young man there*, the measurer seen still in the distance. The designation points to his inexperience. He is not yet initiated into God's higher counsels.—הלז for הַלָּזֶה, Ges. § 34, Anm. 2.—*As open land*, i.e. without walls (cf. Ezek. xxxviii. 11), Jerusalem will lie (ישב, properly sit), because the multitude of inhabitants will not bear such limitation. Thus, there can be no question of fixing limits.—מֵרֹב like מִטּוֹב, i. 17. Ver. 9. Despite the absence of walls, there need be no fear as to security. The Lord Himself will encircle it better than walls and ramparts, as He is also the pledge and source of its glory, as He takes up His abode in it (cf. ver. 14). A wall of *fire*, in harmony with God's holy nature, one that consumes everything approaching it with hostile purpose; cf. elsewhere Isa. xxvi. 1, xxxiii. 21. Ver 10. The exalting of Jerusalem has for its reverse the punishing of the heathen: *flee ye* from the *land of the north*, i.e. Chaldæa, according to the sequel: see Introd. to Comm. on Jer. and Ezek. xxi. 2.—פרשׂ, to be understood in accordance with Ezek. xvii. 21 (against Hitz.).—*To all the four quarters of heaven*, like the four winds of heaven. The verifying clause first shows that the summons to flight has gone forth to the scattered people of Yahveh. Ver. 11. *Zion*, understood here, of course, of the community of Yahveh, the population of Jerusalem, in opposition to which appears the *daughter of Babylon* in the accus., because בת בבל is just as well the city itself; cf. Comm. on Isa. i. 8. Ver. 12. The speaker

has Yahveh of hosts said: He sent me after glory to the heathen who plundered you; for whoever touches you touches the apple of his eye. 13. For behold, I shake my hand against them and they shall be a prey to their servants, and you shall know that Yahveh of hosts has sent me.—14. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion! For behold, I come to dwell in thy midst, is Yahveh's oracle. 15. And many heathen nations shall join themselves to Yahveh on that day, and shall be my people, and I will dwell in thy midst, and thou shalt know that Yahveh of hosts has sent me to thee. 16. And Yahveh shall take possession of Judah as his

here is Yahveh Himself, more precisely, as the sequel shows (he sent me), "*the angel of Yahveh*" (i. 11), who expresses God's most peculiar nature and imparts His revelation to the world, especially to His people. Cf. his appearance, i. 8 ff. *Sent after glory, i.e.* to procure it (meant as in Hag. ii. 7). The Lord is exceedingly sensitive to the wrongs inflicted on His people. Whoever attacks them touches *the apple of His eye;* cf. the similar passage, Deut. xxxii. 10. The pupil is mentioned as peculiarly sensitive to a mere touch.—Instead of עינו, some codices read עֵינִי, which is also possible, and is even said by the Massoretes to be original, the third person being declared a *tiqqun sopherim;* see Baer, and Strack, *Dikduke Hatcamim*, p. 45. Ver. 13. The *waving of the hand* to strike, like Isa. xi. 15. The better attested Massoretic reading is לְעַבְדֵיהֶם, not לעבד׳.—*And you shall know, that Yahveh of hosts sent me*, as in ver. 15, iv. 9, vi. 15, not with Targ. to be explained: you shall know by the fulfilment, that Yahveh sent me to prophesy. This angel's mission consists, not in mere words, but in deeds. When he has transformed the world and introduced the kingdom of God, they shall know that Yahveh is present in him. Ver. 14 turns again to the happiness coming to Zion. All its glory, according to ver. 9 and also Ezek. xliii. 9, xlviii. 35, etc., will have its root and summit in Yahveh's abode in it; cf. also Zech. ix. 9, where certainly the Messiah is referred to. Ver. 15. This adhesion of the *heathen* to God's people, by which His community will be enlarged, is stated also in viii. 20 f.; cf. xiv. 16 ff. and Hag. ii. 7. In this way the many גוים will become one עם. The significant words repeated from ver. 13 f. Ver. 16. This widening of the community does not preclude Yahveh still acknowledging (נחל, to take as a possession, as in Ex. xxxiv. 9;

heritage in the holy land, and shall again choose Jerusalem 17. Be still, all flesh, before Yahveh! For He has risen up out of his holy dwelling!

Exposition.

Contents of ch. ii. 5–17. Third Vision: The Glorious Upbuilding of Jerusalem. 1. The City of God without limits, vv. 5–9; 2. Recompense to the Heathen, vv. 10–13; 3. Happiness of Jerusalem, vv. 14–17.

Jerusalem of the present lacks much of its ancient greatness and glory. This third vision presents the consummation of God's city, showing with dramatic vividness how not only the empirical present, but even previous prophetic conceptions will be expanded and spiritualised in the fulfilment. If after i. 16 we might think that a restoration of the city in its early magnitude is meant, the eager youth, who would fain set to work and begin with the measuring line, is taught that there can be no measuring at all, as the growth of the richly blessed city of God cannot be impeded by such fixing of limits. They need not provide for its safety by building walls, as the Lord will be as much their powerful guard without as their internal source of inexhaustible glory. Here, as in Isa. xxxiii. 21, the idea abandons the image of a city conceivable to antiquity, and struggles after a more spiritual conception.

A twofold prospect attaches itself to this revelation: first, of the judgment on the heathen, who must yield up their treasures to glorify Zion in punishment for their plunder of it (vv. 10–13); and secondly, of the happiness of the city, where Yahveh will then take up His abode. The judgment

Ezek. xxii. 16) Judah as his inheritance (cf. Deut. xxxii. 9), which He causes to dwell in its God-given land of Canaan as a *holy* land.—*Again chooses* Jerusalem, see i. 17.—Ver. 17, according to Zeph. i. 7; Hab. ii. 20.—Announces the parousia: God has already set out from His heavenly abode.

on the world, like the dwelling of Yahveh in Jerusalem, is mediated by a messenger, who alternates with Yahveh strangely in the discourse, vv. 12–15: It is the angel of Yahveh, in whom the divine nature and will is most directly revealed, who has received this double mandate. His first mission was announced in i. 11. Moreover, the dwelling of the Lord in Zion is mediated by him. It is significant in the latter promise that the heathen also receive a positive share in the benefits issuing from this most glorious union of God with men. Many of them will do homage to the Lord, who has anew made His land and people His own inheritance, and so the centre of His rule upon earth.

4. *The Hopeful Priesthood,* ch. iii.

III. 1. And he showed me Joshua, the high priest, standing before the angel of Yahveh, while Satan stood at his right hand to accuse him. 2. Then said Yahveh to Satan: Yahveh rebuke thee, Satan; yea, Yahveh, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee! Is not this a brand snatched from

Chapter III.

Ver. 1. *And he showed me*, namely Yahveh (ii. 3), more precisely the angel communicating the visions (i. 9, iv. 1).—*Joshua*, cf. Hag. i. 1.—*Standing before*, applies here, not to the position of a servant or minister, but that of one accused before his judge. The *angel* of Yahveh, as in i. 11; cf. ii. 12 ff. According to ver. 5 also, he is to be thought of as standing.—*Satan*, i.e. the adversary, especially accuser, as the verb here shows; cf. Job ii. and Rev. xii. 10.—*At his*, i.e. Joshua's *right* side. This may have been the usual position of the accuser before the court. Ver. 2. Here also *Yahveh and the angel of Yahveh* interchange. Yahveh speaks, but more exactly the medium of His revelation mentioned in ver. 1; hence also the spokesman speaks of Yahveh in the third person as of a higher authority, of whose assent, however, he is certain.—גער, to rebuke, to put to silence by a sharp correction, as in Jer. xxix. 27.—The rebuke is repeated in order to add to God's name the character in which he could not do other than reduce

the fire? 3. But Joshua was clothed in filthy garments, while he stood before the angel. 4. And he began and said to them that stood before him as follows: Take the filthy garments off him! And he said to him: Behold, I have taken away thy guilt from thee, and festive garments shall be put on thee. 5. Then I said: Let them (also) put a clean

Satan to silence: He has anew chosen Jerusalem, cf. i. 17, ii. 16.—And in *this* (Joshua) has He not done a miracle of grace, saving him from certain destruction? Cf. Amos iv. 11. See the fate of his grandfather and father in Hag. i. 1. Ver. 3. Supplementary circumstantial sentence. Filthy garments do not merely denote the state of accusation. As with the Romans the *vestis sordida* (Livy, ii. 54, vi. 20) in this case is to be thought of, not as filthy, but simply as dark-coloured; so the Israelites when accused wore at most black garments (Joseph. *Ant.* xiv. 9. 4) as a sign of grief, and perhaps also of the stain to be removed. Filthy garments, on the contrary, point to actual guilt, see ver. 4. But Joshua, whom the two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, elsewhere highly honour, can scarcely be thus marked out as a specially wicked sinner. Nor can we take into account that he is supposed to have married his sons to heathen women (Targ., Jerome, Rashi, Kimchi). Of his family in the wider sense, certainly such unions are related (Ezra x. 18; Neh. xiii. 28); but this falls at a considerably later point.—Nor can the reference be to the entire guilt of the nation (cf. Hag. ii. 11 ff., its uncleanness because of the leaving off of the temple-building), Hitzig, Kohler; but the transgressions and offences, belonging in various forms to the administration of his predecessors and its interruption, as well as the defects adhering of necessity in a Levitical respect to a high priest who had grown up in a heathen land, might give rise to doubt of the existence of a high priesthood valid and acceptable in the eyes of Yahveh. Ver. 4. *Then he began* (the angel of Yahveh) *and said* to those who stood as servants before him, the angel (1 Kings x. 8). העביר עון, as in 2 Sam. xii. 13. God's arrangement in the perfect as commonly; cf. also. Isa. vi. 7.—The infin. והלבישׁ, is still governed by the imperative.—*Festive garments*, strongest antithesis to the filthy garments, symbolise, not merely righteousness, but honourable distinction from God. Ver. 5. Instead of ואמר, Ewald needlessly requires ויאמר. LXX omit it. According to the Hebrew text, the prophet, who is looking on, joins in the action with the prayer, that the last article of dress still wanting may not be forgotten, but given him in

turban on his head; then they put a clean turban on his head, and put garments on him, while the angel of Yahveh (still) stood there. 6. Then the angel of Yahveh testified to Joshua as follows: 7. Thus says Yahveh of hosts: If thou walkest in my ways and regardest my ordinance, and thou both rulest my house and regardest my courts, then will I permit thee to walk among them that stand there. 8. Hear now, O Joshua, the high priest, thou and thy colleagues, who sit before thee—for men of a divine sign are they. For behold, I will bring *my servant Shoot*. 9. For behold, the

clean form; and his wish is complied with.—צניף, general expression for turban; the high priestly one is called specifically מִצְנֶפֶת. Ver. 6. עוד, Hiphil with בְּ, to solemnly testify to some one, Gen. xliii. 3. Ver. 7. משמרת, the observance = what is to be observed. The suff. applies to the author.—The apodosis does not begin with וְגַם (so the majority), but only with the impressive ונתתי. So the accents rightly, Kimchi, v. Hofmann. The two גַּם, remind more precisely of his obligations.—מהלכים cannot be partic. It is plural substantive, to be derived either from מַהֲלָךְ in which case perhaps מַהֲלָכִים should be read (Hitz.), or from מְהַלֵּךְ in the same sense (Ew., Köhler). *These who stand there* are, as in ver. 4, the angels before God's face. Among these the high priest has the right to go in and out, and so has free access to God's throne! Ver. 8. *Thy colleagues, who sit before thee*, not now but in the priestly conclaves. It is a designation of the whole college; cf. 2 Kings iv. 38, vi. 1, the disciples sitting before the master.—*Men of a divine sign* (cf. on Isa. viii. 18), *i.e.* who have a miraculous prophetic significance. המה applies first to the colleagues; but self-evidently this is true of the high priest in the first instance. To what this priesthood, itself wondrously delivered, points, the conclusion says: *for behold, I bring in my servant Shoot*. This mysterious name of the Messiah was formed from oracles like Jer. xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15; but cf. also already Isa. iv. 2, xi. 1, with liii. 2. It is used in Zechariah as a proper name, vi. 12. Ver. 9. The *stone* lying before Joshua, as it seems, in the vision, cannot be the foundation-stone (Hag. ii. 18) laid two months before (against Rosenmüller, Hitz., Neum.), nor yet the topstone of the temple spoken of in iv. 7 (against Ewald), as one does not see why this should lie before the high priest; just as little is precious stone meant, adorning the high priest's breastplate

stone which I have laid before Joshua—upon one stone are seven eyes set—behold, I will engrave its inscriptions, is the oracle of Yahveh of hosts, and I will take away the guilt of this land on one day. 10. On the same day, is the oracle of Yahveh of hosts, you shall invite, every one his neighbour, under the vine and under the fig-tree.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. iii. Fourth Vision: The Hopeful Priesthood. 1. Joshua justified by grace and confirmed as High Priest, vv. 1–7; 2. The Perfect Priesthood of the future, vv. 8–10.

This fourth vision reveals God's gracious thoughts with

(Bredenk.), which נתן לפני would not suit. What lies before the high priest officiating in full attire, is rather an altar, better a substitute for the ark as an instrument of propitiation, cf. the close of the verse. But it is easily possible that such a stone not merely existed in the vision, but after the manner of the rock now prominent in reality in the Sachra mosque, it once took the place of the Most Holy Place; as, in fact, Mishna Yoma v. 2 relates, that in the Holy of Holies of the second temple, a stone of the time of the early prophets, called foundation-stone, rose three fingers above the earth, on which the high priest used to set down the incense-vessel. Volck also (Herzog, ii. 796) brings the present passage into connection therewith. This stone appears here as one placed by God, not prepared by human hands. Further, God's gracious regard is fastened upon it; cf. with the *seven eyes*, iv. 10; Rev. i. 4, v. 6. And the further elaboration of this sacred thing God reserves to Himself.—פִּתֻּחִים are ordinary engraved inscriptions, such as are put on gems, seal-rings, etc. (Ex. xxviii. 11, 36, etc.), as figures, whose outlines are cut out (1 Kings vi. 29). On the present stone the Lord will imprint His as yet unknowable character, like the divine inscription put on the tables of the covenant, Ex. xxxii. 16.—With this will be connected a divine act, by which *on one day* (= ἐφάπαξ, Heb. vii. 27) the sin of the land is removed, expiated. Ver. 10. The effect of this expiatory act again will be, that the land will then enjoy the long-promised untroubled state of peace (see especially Micah iv. 4).—לְרֵעֵהוּ, better attested than אֶל־רֵעֵהוּ.

respect to the priestly office. Zechariah sees this dangerously imperilled, as Satan, the spirit envious of God's Church, accuses (ver. 1) the present representative of the high priesthood of being unworthy of such a high position among the angels of the Lord (ver. 7). As the accusation is not really personal, but applies to the office, which has fallen into discredit through the fault of Zerubbabel's predecessors as well as through the circumstances of the time, and presents weak points enough to the evil eye of the accuser, so also it is not merely Zerubbabel's personal position, but the continuance of the office itself, that is threatened by the accusation. The accusation is therefore a highly perilous one. With the office, which is the medium of intercourse with God, and especially of reconciliation, the whole position and greatness of the covenant people would also collapse. But this serious assault is averted by a decree of divine grace. Not for this has the Lord wondrously preserved this people and His priest —in order, finally, to reject them for sins and imperfections cleaving to them! He has still more glorious purposes in view respecting them. The present priesthood is but a type, pointing to the greater One to come, *God's servant Shoot*, by which hieroglyph Zechariah designates the Messiah who grows wondrously out of deep obscurity to the highest, most beneficent greatness. With His advent will be connected the formation, already begun by God, of the yet incomplete and enigmatic system of expiation in the temple; with this again the perfect, final expiation of the transgressions at present but imperfectly taken away by many single acts; and with this, finally, the beginning of the peaceful, blessed final state, when one will invite another to enjoy the riches of blessing lavished by the Lord. The relation of the future Son of David to the high priestly office is indeed not expressly stated. But at all events, in his days the system of expiation and work of the high priesthood will be completed by divine action, God Himself establishing an entirely new and far more perfect

kind of expiation. And the priests being called a divine sign, because the Messiah comes, is most easily explained by supposing that they are types of his person; he will therefore unite the priesthood with the kingly office, which we shall find expressly said in vi. 12 f.

5. *The Golden Candlestick*, ch. iv.

IV. 1. Then the angel, who spake with me, returned, and waked me up, as one is awakened out of his sleep. 2. And he said to me: What seest thou? Then I said: I saw, and behold, a candlestick entirely of gold; and it had its bowl above it, and its seven lamps upon it; and seven* pipes went

Chapter IV.

Ver. 1. More exact description of the transition to prophetic seeing; the sensation was similar to that of waking up. It was not an ordinary waking up, as the seer was not asleep; but he experienced a heightening of the perceptive powers, such as one has in waking. To judge by the language, in the pause a certain lassitude had seized him. Cf. Ed. König, *Offenbarungsbegriff*, ii. 19 ff. and 55 ff. Ver. 2. Kethib יואמר, mistake in writing from the preceding. Read with Keri וָאֹמַר. —*I saw* (cf. i. 8, ii. 5), *i.e.* I entered into the state of seeing. The picture is still before his eyes. To the genit. of the material (זהב) is added an accus. of the degree (כלה).—וגלה for וְגִלָּהּ, cf. Hos. xiii. 2.—The second שבעה is to be erased, according to LXX, as neither forty-nine (Keil, *et al.*) nor fourteen (Köhler) *pipes*, but only *seven* are intended. So Ewald, Hitzig. The seven-branched candlestick is copied from that of the tabernacle, Ex. xxv. 31 ff., xxxvii. 17 ff., which was represented tenfold in the temple. But it is distinguished from the latter by the oil-holder by which the several lamps could be fed; see what is said in vv. 3, 11 f. How this holder could be attached to the seven lamps it is hard to say; but this makes no difficulty to the vision. That the lamps had a quite different position than in the ordinary candlestick (Köhler: circular in form) is not to be supposed.—The pipes, also, are not to be confounded with the branches (קָנִים) of the candlestick; the latter are not mentioned, because they had nothing unusual in

to the lamps, which were upon it. 3. And two olive-trees (stood) above it, one on the right of the bowl and one on its left. 4. And I began and said to the angel, who spake with me, as follows: What mean these, my lord? 5. Then the angel, who spake with me, replied and said to me: Knowest thou not what these mean? Then I said: No, my lord! 6. Then he answered and said to me as follows: This is the word of Yahveh to Zerubbabel, namely: Not by martial force, and not by strength, but *by my Spirit*, has Yahveh of hosts said. 7. Who then art thou, great mountain before Zerubbabel? To a plain! And he shall bring forth the topstone with shoutings: Grace, grace unto it!

8. And the word of Yahveh came to me as follows: 9. The hands of Zerubbabel have founded this house, and his hands shall complete (it); and thou shalt know that Yahveh of hosts has sent me to you. 10. For who despises the day of little

them. Ver. 3. Details respecting the connection of these trees with the candlestick, see ver. 11 ff. Ver. 4. אלה refers not merely to the trees, but also to the candlestick. Ver. 5. This question implies that, to the pious Israelite, versed in the symbolism of the temple, the interpretation could not be difficult. Ver. 6. Apart from figure, the saying states the quintessence of the meaning of the vision, certainly a saying in need of supplement: *by my Spirit*, namely, is accomplished what might and military power cannot effect. In the vision, also, the chief emphasis lies on the contrivance by which the oil, the symbol of the Spirit, is conveyed to the candlestick. Ver. 7. This divine word of rebuke breaks into the scene in a graphic way (cf. iii. 2): To a plain, namely, turn! (הֱיֵה ל׳). *The great mountain*, which stands in the way of the building prince, is the hostile, or at least unfriendly world-power. The *topmost* stone is the keystone crowning the building. הראשה, added by way of apposition.—תשאות, accus. of accompanying circumstance. They are congratulatory cries of the multitude. Ver. 9. Whether the founding Hag. ii. 10, 18, or the former one, Ezra iii. 10, is meant, amounts to the same: Zerubbabel is the founder in both cases.—*And thou shalt perceive*, etc., to be understood, after the analogy of ii. 13, 15, not of sending to prophesy, but to active help in building. Ver. 10. *Who despises*, who is willing to despise? A similar disapproving question Isa. xliv. 10.—The *day of small* things, limited circumstances.

things, while with joy they see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel—these seven, the eyes of Yahveh, which sweep over the whole earth? 11. Then I answered and said to him: What are these two olive-trees, on the right of the candlestick and on its left? 12. And I began the second time, and said to him: What are the two tufts of the olive-trees, which are beside the two golden funnels which pour out the gold from them? 13. Then he spake to me thus: Knowest thou not what these are? Then I said: No, my lord! 14. Then he said: These are the two sons of oil, which stand by the lord of the whole earth.

In God's sight the building is a joyous sight and of universal significance!—הבדיל, specialising apposition.—*These seven*, more precisely explained by sequel. That the eyes in the vision were visible does not follow from the demonstrative, which, however, is not to be rendered: "those;" cf. ii. 9. These eyes, commanding the whole earth in their range, concentrate and rest with joyous delight on this one point. How presumptuous, then, to ridicule the work! Ver. 12 repeats, and also specialises, the question put in ver. 11. His special attention is attracted by two tufts into which the branches of the tree run out, and from which the oil flows into the bowl. שִׁבֳּלֵי, elsewhere שִׁבֳּלִים, ears, here tufts on the branches. The צִנְתְּרוֹת (here only) in any case convey the oil from the branches to the bowl. They will therefore be funnel-like cups (others: noses) to hold the oil which runs openly from them, on which account they are to be considered as fastened to the bowl.—Which pour *the gold*, i.e. the oil, so called because of its pure brightness, and symbolically precious as gold. Thus in the candlestick everything is golden, worthy of God. Ver. 13 as in ver. 5. Ver. 14. *Sons of oil* (cf. as to the free use of בֵּן, Isa. v. 1) = anointed with oil. These are the king and the high priest in virtue of office: cf. Lev. xxi. 10; 1 Sam. x. 1.—They are the two dignitaries who, equal to the angels in their office (cf. iii. 7), stand before (on עמד with עַל, see on Isa. vi. 2) the Lord of the world as His ministers. Their office has also universal significance, cf. ver. 10. More definitely, the trees apply to these two offices, the two tufts to their then occupants. Ver. 13 f. has the latter specially in view.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. iv. Fifth Vision: The Golden Candlestick. 1. The Completion of the Temple by the Spirit of the Lord, vv. 1–7; 2. Monarchy and Priesthood as Channels of the Divine Spirit to the Church, vv. 8–14.

As the previous vision recalls to mind the lost palladium of the temple (the ark), so the present one presents a significant ornament of the temple, the sacred seven-branched candlestick,—not a symbol of God (Hitzig, Ewald erroneously identify the seven lamps with the seven eyes of God!), but a symbol of the Church filled by God's Spirit, and letting its light shine to His glory on earth. It is the old symbol, seen early in the tabernacle of Moses, and afterwards multiplied in the temple. But a new element is added: the lamps are no longer fed with oil by human care, but this pours in spontaneously by means of the bowl which is placed above; and especially the two olive-trees, which cause the pure, golden liquid to run unceasingly into the bowl. In a striking manner this calmest, most solemn vision is addressed to the representative of worldly power, Zerubbabel, who is charged with the temple-building. Everything in the building is done, not by force of arms and force of work, but by the action of the calm, gentle, peaceful Spirit of God, whom the oil represents. But the hindrances, lying in the way of the building from without, are swept aside (iv. 7) by a decree of the Lord, as in iii. 2 the opponent of the high priest is put to silence in a similar way. Ver. 9 promises most definitely that the building will be carried through by Zerubbabel, who began it, which was fulfilled in a few years. Certainly this outward work was insignificant, but not therefore unworthy; on the contrary, it was highly worthy in God's sight, as ver. 10 declares, according to which God's watchful eyes are concentrated on this small beginning, out of which will issue the glorious end spoken of in iii. 8 ff.; according to the latter

passage a distinction must be made between the outward building by Zerubbabel and the glorious consummation by the Messiah. That consummation, also, is to be expected through the Spirit of the Lord, who will govern purely and righteously, wisely and strongly, calmly and steadfastly, and fit the Church for the pure worship of the Lord. This Spirit is mediated and secured to the Church by the two anointed dignitaries standing before God, or the two offices of the monarchy and the high priesthood.

6. *The Curse-roll and the Sin-bushel,* ch. v.

V. 1. And again I lifted up mine eyes and saw, and behold, a flying *book-roll!* 2. Then he said to me: What seest thou: Then I said: I see a flying roll, whose length is twenty ells, and its breadth ten ells. 3. Then he said to me: This is the curse, which goes forth over the whole land; for every one that steals is purged thence as it is, and every one that swears

Chapter V.

Ver. 1. The book-roll is supposed to be opened out, hence its length and breadth are visible according to ver. 2. Ver. 2. *Twenty* in the ell, a common construction: Ex. xxvi. 8, xxvii. 9, etc. The twofold statement of magnitude shows how colossal the roll is, and also of a proportion common in Levitical things, 20 : 10, such as is seen in the holy place of the tabernacle or the courts in the Solomonic temple, 1 Kings vi. 3, without any specific allusion to these rooms being intended. Ver. 3. The reference is to the cleansing of the entire Holy *Land*, not of the whole earth (so Hofm., Klief., Bredenk.), as כזה shows (cf. Gen. xxxvii. 17; cf. also ver. 11).—The roll is to be conceived as written on with an active *curse*.—Every *stealer*, common thief, the whole tribe of thieves. כמוה, according to Jerome, in accordance with the roll: more precisely, in accordance with the curse written on it (Köhler); better, on account of the order of words (after כזה), *like as it* (Ewald), *i.e.* as it flees away, it carries the incorrigible sinners with it. נקה, Niph., here to be purged away, removed.—The *swearer*, to be explained, according to the more precise statement of ver. 4, of one accustomed to swear falsely; not, according to Matt. v. 34 ff.,

is purged thence as it is. 4. And I have caused it to go forth, says Yahveh of hosts, that it may enter the house of the thief, and the house of him that swears falsely in my name, and dwell within his house, and consume it with its beams and its stones.

5. And the angel, who spake with me, came forth and said to me: Lift up thine eyes now, and see what goes forth! 6. Then I said: What is it? Then he said: This is the bushel, that goes forth. And he said: This is their transgression* in the whole land. 7. And behold a plummet was lifted up, and there was a single woman sitting within the bushel. 8. Then he said: This is wickedness; and he cast

as if swearing in general were sin (against Hitz.). Ver. 4. וּלְנָהּ for וְלִנָּהּ, from לוּן, to pass the night. Where God's curse dwells in a house, it inflicts fearful devastations.—וכלתו from וְכִלָּתְהוּ, Ges. § 75, Anm. 19. The suff. refers to the house, like the following ones. Ver. 5. יצא, here both times as in ii. 7; see there. Ver. 6. More precisely corresponding to the question would be the answer: "that which goes forth is a bushel," or the bushel; the curse governs, as in ver. 3.—The ephah, corn-measure; see on Isa. v. 10. Why this appears as a vessel of unrighteousness appears plainly from passages like Amos viii. 5; Micah vi. 10. It recalls the very common and aggravated sins of trade.—Instead of עיים read עוֹנָם, after LXX, Syr. —Differently Ewald: their appearance; similarly Köhl., Bredenk. *et al.*, which is faulty, because the ephah was not at all suited to give a sight of what was in it. The suff. in עונם is explained by the addition בכל ה׳ = the guilt of the inhabitants of the whole land. Their guilt is gathered together in this vessel. Ver. 7. In order to show the seer the contents, the lead cover is lifted a moment. ככר, round disc, as the ephah also is to be considered round. Beside the measure, a weight is thus named in order to allude more definitely to sins of trade.—ותאת, properly = and *she*, namely, who was to be seen therein, was *a single woman*.—We are not to ask how a woman found room in a bushel, as the ephah certainly, like the roll, was of unusual size. Not the size, but the form of the bushel, is here chiefly in view. Ver. 8. This is unrighteousness or ungodliness personified! This, being feminine, is represented by a woman. He threw her violently back, that she might not escape. She is finally shut up, that she may not again defile

her down into the midst of the bushel, and cast the plummet on its mouth. 9. And I lifted up mine eyes and looked, and behold there came forth two women, and wind was in their wings; but they had wings like storks' feathers, and bore away the bushel between earth and heaven. 10. Then I said to the angel, who spake with me: Whither do these carry the bushel? 11. Then he said to me: They would build her a house in the land of Shinar, and when it is erected they will set her down* there in her place.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. v. Sixth (double) Vision: Twofold Cleansing of the Land. 1. The flying Curse-roll, vv. 1–4; 2. The Sin-bushel carried away, vv. 5–11.

Comforting as these night visions are in general to Judah, there is not wanting an earnest monition, that if the land is to enjoy its honourable and blissful future, it needs a thorough cleansing. This takes place here before the eyes of

the land. The leaden cover; אבן, synonymous with ככר, ver. 7. The suff. in פיה refers, of course, to האיפה; cf. Gen. xxix. 2 f. (against Pressel!). Ver. 9. Corresponding with the first figure, two more women appear to carry the sin-bushel as fast as possible away out of the land. They are furnished with wings of *storks*, because a flight to a distance is necessary. The *wind* helps their flight. These two genii have no independent significance: their significance, as with the four smiths (ii. 3), lies in what they do. Köhler goes beyond the right limit of interpretation in emphasising the uncleanness of storks: Neumann still more so in conversely idealising the two-winged carriers into gracious messengers of love.—ותישנה, Ges. § 74, 3, Anm. 4. נשא involves lifting up, bearing and carrying away. Ver. 11. לה (with weakened ה for לָהּ) applies to the woman. The *land of Shinar* recalls Gen. x. 10, xi. 2, according to which the God-opposing empire was there from of old, with its capital Babylon, which was also the centre of dishonourable commerce, Ezek. xvii. 4.—והניחה, rare hybrid form between Hoph. and Hiph. Read, with Klostermann, after LXX: וְהִנִּיחָהּ (Ges. § 72, Anm. 9). In מכונתה *ō* has passed into *ū* because of the advancing tone.

the seer in a double vision contained in two closely-connected figures. A great curse-roll flies over the land, which, wherever it comes, carries away the gross sinners, and overturns their houses, which are built by wrong and enriched by fraud. As special examples of such sinners, thieves are mentioned—in the selfish, covetous generation of the present time, dishonesty in regard to mine and thine was especially widespread—and false swearers, as avarice easily led to false swearing, a sin which, most of all, provoked God's wrath.

But this punishment of the worst sinners is not all; the sin itself, which pollutes all more or less, must be done away out of the land. Zechariah sees this in this form: a corn-bushel, containing the wickedness of the whole land, is carried away to a distant region. In this form, dishonesty in the use of weight and measure—again an expression of avarice as a bosom sin of Israel—is exhibited as a specially widespread evil. This sin must not remain longer in Canaan, the land of the holy God; it is carried to Babylonia, the land of godless empire and the seat of dishonest commerce, where it may further carry on its practices. The two cleansing acts of this chapter are complementary, like the two goats on the Day of Atonement, Lev. xvi., of which the first must give its blood as an expiation before the Lord, while the second carries away the guilt of the people, and the impurity springing from it, to the region of the impure desert-demon. The cleansing judgment, despite the terror, is a benefit to the land, which is thus purified and fitted to receive the blessing pictured in the former visions.

7. *The Four War-chariots,* vi. 1–8.

VI. 1. And again I lifted up mine eyes and saw, and

Chapter VI.

Ver. 1. *Forth between the two mountains;* probably out of the hollow, i. 8. The two mountains are also well known, there-

behold, four war-chariots, which went forth between the two mountains,—and the mountains were mountains of brass. 2. In the first chariot were red horses, and in the second black horses, 3. and in the third chariot white horses, and in the fourth streaked, bay. 4. And I began and said to the angel, who spake with me: What mean these, my Lord? 5. Then the angel answered and said to me: These are the four winds of heaven, which go forth, after presenting themselves before the ruler of the whole earth. 6. The chariot

fore, perhaps, the temple hill and Mount of Olives (Keil, Bredenk.). They seem *of brass* in the vision, because immovable as Yahveh's mountains. The dwelling, from which He moves the whole world, is itself unmoved.—The *chariots* are war-chariots, answering to the horsemen, i. 8 ff.—On the number *four*, cf. ii. 1. Ver. 2. *Red horses*, as in i. 8.—*Black*, here only, in any case a colour suggesting evil, reminds of sorrow and death. The more specific interpretation of Rev. vi. 5 f. does not govern here. Ver. 3. *White*, as in i. 8, see after i. 7–17.—בָּרֹד, as in Gen. xxxi. 10, 12, spotted, speckled; properly, covered with hail, marked with spots.—אמצים, strong (from אָמַץ, adj.); Aquila, *καρτεροί*, Vulg. *fortes*, is unsuitable. We expect a colour. LXX, *ψαροί*; see on i. 8. Rather it is bright red, sorrel, א standing for ח (Isa. lxiii. 1). This would then be the ground colour, the spots white. Cf. ישרקים, ver. 8. Ver. 4. Like iv. 4. Ver. 5. *The four winds*, here conceived as judicial powers of God, traversing all the four quarters of heaven. In form and matter, cf. Job i. 6, ii. 1. The winds have come to make report, as they convey, in a sense, to God everything taking place on earth, and then go forth furnished with new commands and powers. That here merely the four winds, in the usual sense of the word, are not meant, is clear from the freedom with which, in ver. 6, several are despatched to the same side, by which a specially intensive exercise of God's power is intimated. Ver. 6. To the *north* belong the most considerable world-powers, like Babylonia, Assyria, Persia, etc. Here, primarily, the first one is meant; it has not yet felt God's wrath; cf. ver. 8 with ii. 10. The black team of death is followed by the white one of victory, as God will completely triumph in that region, where the world-power has done most wrong to His people, and is still the most powerful. Differently, Ewald: אל אחריהם, "towards behind them," which is said to mean westward (?); then the east would be the more

with the black horses goes forth to the north country, and the white went forth after them, and the streaked went forth to the south country. 7. And the red* went forth, and sought to go in order to wander to and fro in the earth. And he said: Go, wander to and fro in the earth! Then they went to and fro in the earth. 8. And he cried to me, and said to me as follows: Behold, they who have gone forth to the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country.

Exposition.

Contents of vi. 1–8. Seventh Vision: The Four War-Chariots.

This last vision (the seventh, if we combine the two pictures, ch. v., as one twofold vision) stands in close relation to the first one. If, at the beginning of the night, the seer saw the divine bands of horsemen, who had swept through the earth, assemble before the dwelling of Yahveh to make report, now towards morning he sees these chariots, in which God's martial power is embodied, go forth, charged with God's commission to the world, in a sense charged with His judicial

necessary.—In vv. 6, 7, the language of the angel passes insensibly into the prophet's narrative.—The *spotted* go to the *south land*. In the south were a number of peoples that came into account, so Edom, but especially Egypt (see Isa. xxx. 6; Dan. xi. 5), then farther away Cush and others. Ver. 7. והאמצים is very strange; as in ver. 2, this is only an adjective to characterise the spotted horses already sent to the south, and the first team of ver. 2 has not yet been used. Hence it is best, with Gesen., Ew., instead of this, to read והאדמים. These go forth full of eagerness for a goal and field of action, but receive none, but must at first be content awhile with a roving mission (ההלך, as in i. 10 f.). The expression is more general in ver. 7*b*, where it applies to all four chariots, which have received the divine command to wander over the earth. Ver. 8. They have scarcely departed, before the angel, with a cry of excitement, bids the seer observe how those that went to the north have already quickly fulfilled their mission.—רוח, here the spirit of wrath, the longing for vengeance (cf. Isa. iv. 4, and

wrath. The colours of the horses have the same meaning as in ch. i., p. 317. The all-embracing character of this divine power is shown in its controlling the four quarters of the world (cf. the number four in ii. 1 ff.); its inexhaustibleness is finely seen in this, that, after the north, where God has most to punish, has received two chariots in excess, and one has been sent to the south, where the danger is at present less, one is still left over, which seeks employment in vain. Thus, for a foe arising in the east or west God has beforehand ample store of punishment in readiness. Here also, as in i. 8, ii. 1 ff., the circle of vision is geographical, not historical, yet with recognition of the political circumstances existing at the time.

Conclusion: Crowning of the High Priest, vi. 9–15.

VI. 9. Then came the word of Yahveh to me as follows: 10. Take at the hand of the captives, of Heldai, of Tobiah, and of Jedaiah—and, indeed, thou shalt the same day go into the house of Josiah, son of Zephaniah, whither they have come from Babylon,—11. and thou shalt take silver and gold,

the Greek θυμός).—הניח, as in Ezek. v. 13, properly to settle, bring to rest, so to pacify wrath by wreaking it on some one. Ver. 9. The mode of introduction shows that the visions are at an end, and another form of revelation is beginning, namely, that of simple divine speech, but this time summoning to a symbolic action. But, on the other hand, the opening joins on so closely to what precedes, both as to form and matter, that it is heard in the same night as an appendix to the visions. Zechariah was, of course, to carry out the command the next morning. Ver. 10. לקוח, absol. infin. for imperat., is again taken up by ולקחת, ver. 11. הגולה, the body of exiles still dwelling in Babylon, who, through the men named, have sent gifts, gold and silver, to adorn the temple.—The style is here especially cumbrous and loose, perhaps the text is corrupt. ביום ה', properly on that day, *i.e.* the day belonging to the night in which the revelations took place.—אשר, whither, as in 1 Kings xii. 2. Ver. 11. Here first comes the object to "take," ver. 10.—And *make*, i.e. get made, as in Ex. xxv. 11 ff. *et al.*—

and prepare a crown, and put it on the head of Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; 12. and thou shalt speak to him as follows: Thus has Yahveh of hosts said, namely, Behold a man whose name is "*Shoot*," and he shall shoot up from below, and he shall build the temple of Yahveh. 13. Verily, *he* shall build the temple of Yahveh, and *he* shall wear the insignia, and sit and rule on his throne; and he shall be priest on his throne, and the counsel of peace shall

עטרות, the plur. does not refer to a plurality of crowns (Jerome, Rosenm., Hitz., Ew., Bredenk. *et al.*), but to the various silver and gold hoops forming a crown; cf. Job xxxi. 36.—Ewald arbitrarily transforms the action altogether in representing Zerubbabel also with a crown. He inserts זרבבל ובראש, "on the head of *Zerubbabel, and on the head* of Joshua," and in ver. 12 changes אליו into אליהם! Hitzig the same. Wellhausen also supposes a "correction" with a purpose, for בין שניהם, ver. 13, is far from justifying this. Rather the significant feature is that the high priest is crowned according to custom. Thus is announced that union of the two dignities which was already intimated in iii. 8, where also priesthood (not kingship) is the starting-point, as a type of the Messiah. Ver. 12. *Behold, a man whose name* . . . ; Joshua is not declared to be this man, but הנה points, as in iii. 8 and often, to the future, when such an one will appear. See respecting the name Shoot on iii. 8. The next clause brings out the significance of the name: he will shoot up from that which is beneath Him, thus grow up from the ground out of obscure lowliness. Perversely Ew., Hitz., after LXX, Luth.: under Him it will shoot up = everything be green! Ver. 13. That *he* and none else will *build* the temple, *i.e.* finish, complete it, is repeated with emphasis; so also it is declared that *he* will bear the royal insignia, to which the crown refers as the symbol of royal greatness and glory. Cf. with הוד, Dan. xi. 21; 1 Chron. xxix. 25.—והיה כהן does not introduce another dignitary: "and there shall be (beside him) a priest on his (special) throne" (Hitz.), or on the same throne of the Zemach (LXX, Riehm), as was supposed because of the last words of the verse: both would have needed to be expressed differently. LXX, to whom Riehm appeals, have also put ἐκ δεξιῶν αὐτοῦ instead of the second על כסאו. But in this way the emphasis is lost, which the symbolical action lays on the fact that it is the high priest who is crowned and set on the throne. Rather והיה כ׳ is certainly a further predicate to

rule between them both. 14. But the crown shall be for Heldai,* and for Tobiah, and for Jedaiah, and for the friendliness of the son of Zephaniah for a memorial in the temple of Yahveh. 15. And they that are far off shall come and build in the temple of Yahveh, and you shall know that Yahveh of hosts has sent me to you; and (this) shall be, when you hearken in truth to the voice of Yahveh, your God.

Exposition.

Contents of vi. 9–15. Concluding Symbolical Act: The Crowning of the High Priest.

The conclusion of the night visions is a symbolical act,

the subject stated in the preceding with all emphasis. No doubt, then, בין שניהם is difficult, as two dignitaries, officiating side by side, are not named in the foregoing. We explain it in this way, that two offices or dignities are mentioned, whose occupants hitherto stood uniformly side by side (cf. especially iv. 14). Between these two, the מוֹשֵׁל and the כֹּהֵן, a perfect counsel of peace will first obtain, the most unreserved agreement exist, when the two offices are united in the person of the One who is coming. Similarly Hengstenberg, Hofmann, Keil, Köhler, Bredenkamp, *et al.* As to the matter, cf. Ps. ex. 4.—Ewald inserts: and *Joshua* shall be priest, which has this incongruous effect, that his priesthood would be described as something new: his throne, on the other hand, assumed as well known! Ver. 14. The crown is to remain in the temple as a memento of the donors.—Instead of לחלם, read לחלדי, as in ver. 10 (and 1 Chron. xxvii. 15) and Syr. here. ולחן, not to be taken as proper name (for which Josiah, ver. 10), but for the favour, kindness of the hospitable son of Zephaniah, which also deserves a permanent memorial. Ver. 15. These messengers coming from afar with costly presents is a significant prelude of what will be done again on a larger scale. *Those afar off* refer to the heathen, according to ii. 15, viii. 20–23; Hag. ii. 7 f. The *building* is the glorious building up in the time of the Messiah (ver. 12).—*And you shall know*, etc., according to ii. 13, 15, iv. 9, to be understood of experience of God's assistance, so that the one sent is here also not the prophet (Köhler), but the angel of the Lord.—The close of the verse adds an ethical condition in the sense of i. 1 ff., vii. 7.

which Zechariah is to perform on the next day, and in which also the import of the visions comes to a final climax. He is to adorn the head of Joshua, the high priest, with a crown made out of the silver and gold sent by the exiles for an offering to the temple. It was something new and unheard-of in Israel to see the high priest with a royal crown on his head. But this act was so far from representing a flattering distinction of the person of Joshua, that, on the contrary, it was meant to be a type of the advent of that wondrous Branch, which, according to iii. 8, was the goal of the whole priesthood—the Messiah. What that passage teaches of the significance of the Messiah for the high-priestly function of expiation, which is to find its consummation in Him, is here supplemented and confirmed by the prophecy, that that Shoot will accomplish the glorious building of the temple, and himself, along with his priestly character, wear the highest honour of royalty. The fact that the completion of the building is ascribed to *Him*, in distinction from the Davidic prince ruling at present, is in seeming contradiction with iv. 7, 9, where the completion of the undertaking is ascribed to Zerubbabel. But Zechariah plainly distinguishes from the present building, which the living prince will complete in a few years, a more glorious and spiritual structure, which will be the work of the Messiah alone, and at which ver. 15 also glances. Thus, more definitely than before, by the crowning of the high priest, the personal union is expressed, in virtue of which the royal and the high-priestly office will be united in one hand. Only then will there be perfect harmony in the use of the office for the good of the people, when this union of powers has taken effect in the most worthy representative. Then will be seen a king who lives entirely for the temple, a priest who has always in view the wellbeing of throne and people. This royal priest will insure peace and prosperity within and without.

The Question of Fasting, Chs. vii., viii.

VII. 1. And it came to pass in the fourth year of King Darius, that the word of Yahveh came to Zechariah on the fourth (day) of the ninth month, in Chisleu. 2. Then Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regem Melech with his people in order to pacify the face of Yahveh, 3. with the question to the priests belonging to the house of Yahveh of hosts, and the prophets, as follows: Shall I weep in the fifth month with fasting, as I have now done already so many years? 4. And the word of Yahveh of hosts came to me as follows: 5. Speak to the whole people of the land, and to the priests, thus: If you

Chapter VII.

Ver. 1. Here also the style is somewhat disjointed, but it is not necessary on this account (with Köhler, Keil) to join בארבעה to ver. 2. The *ninth* month, in which two years before the building of the temple was resumed, Hag. ii. 10, 18. This date falls at the close of the year 518 B.C. Ver. 2. *Bethel* (not accus. of direction: "to God's house," as the temple is not so called), name of the well-known town lying north of Jerusalem, whither, according to Ezra ii. 28, Neh. vii. 32, a great number of exiles had returned. *Sharezer* (Isa. xxxvii. 38) and *Regem Melech* are also Assyrian names. They are to be taken as accus. for אֶת־. So Keil, *et al.* As אֶת is wanting, Hitz., Ew., Köhl. would co-ordinate the men in apposition with the city as its prominent citizens—a course not to be recommended.—חַלּוֹת אֶת־פְּנֵי יי, properly to stroke the face of Yahveh (cf. *mulcere, demulcere caput*, to caress), thus to appease, make gracious, used often of appearing before God with gifts (cf. 1 Sam. xiii. 12), with which a special request or prayer, as here, easily connects itself. Ver. 3. *In the fifth month* = Ab. The reference is to the fast-day of this month, the tenth, on which city and temple were committed to the flames according to Jer. lii. 12 f. (on the other hand, 2 Kings xxv. 8 f., the seventh). The later Jews fasted on the ninth Ab.—הִנָּזֵר, construed as absol. infin., Ges. § 51, 2, Anm. 1. The Niph. to separate oneself, devote oneself, *abstain from*, here = fast, in opposition to eating and drinking, ver. 6.—*Now already so many years*, contains perhaps an allusion to this thought, that the seventy years of captivity and mourning must at last be past; cf. ver. 5, i. 12. Ver. 4 coincides in import with ver. 1. Ver. 5. The inquiry made on a certain side calls forth a general instruction. As the

have fasted and mourned in the fifth and the seventh (month), and this now already seventy years, did ye fast at all for my sake? 6. And if you eat and drink, are not ye rather they who eat and drink? 7. Is it not rather necessary (to do) the words, which Yahveh proclaimed by means of the former prophets, when Jerusalem was yet inhabited and lay in peace with her cities around her, and the south and the plain (in like manner) inhabited? 8. And the word of Yahveh came to Zechariah as follows: 9. Thus has Yahveh of hosts said as follows: Practise sterling righteousness, and exercise love and mercy every one toward his brother. 10. And the widow and the orphan, the stranger and the poor do not oppress; and do not devise evil, one against another, in

question is not a mere ceremonial one, requiring priestly exposition of legal enactments, the prophet as the highest authority is to address the people and instruct the *priests*.—*In the seventh month* also there was a new fast-day from the Chaldæan catastrophe, the day of Gedaliah's murder (2 Kings xxv. 25, according to tradition the third day of the seventh month), since when now in like manner seventy years have passed. Instead of צמתני we should expect צמתם לי, Ges. § 121, 4. Yet the suff. is not properly dative (cf., however, Ezek. xxix. 3); rather it signifies: did you touch *me* with your fasting? Neither their fasting nor their eating affects God. They must therefore know themselves, whether they may eat or not, whether it is useful to them to fast or not. Ver. 7. What they are to do instead of this is now put in the front with pregnant brevity and emphasis. If anything is to be supplied to the accus., we should supply: you shall hear and do (Hitz.). Be diligent in this, instead of in mere ceremonies. A similar reminiscence follows to that in i. 4. Had Judah, which was then populous and happy, hearkened to those words, it would have been spared all misfortune. Alongside Jerusalem, situated in the hill country, and its cities are placed two other thickly-populated districts, the south and lowland; cf. Obad. 19. Ver. 8 seems to be the gloss of a reader who did not observe that ver. 9, כה אמר, is historical, and the contents of the דברים, ver. 7, here follow.—משפט א', as in Ezek. xviii. 8.—חסד ור', as in Hos. ii. 21.—Every one in intercourse with his neighbour.—Thus the old prophets always pressed the two great demands, righteousness and love, on the people. Ver. 10. These demands are negatively stated;

your hearts. 11. But they refused to obey, and offered a stubborn neck, and made heavy their ears in order not to hear. 12. And they made their heart adamant in order not to hear the law and the words, which Yahveh of hosts sent by his spirit by means of the former prophets; then was there great wrath from Yahveh of hosts. 13. And it came to pass, like as he called and they heard not, so they shall call and I will not hear, has Yahveh of hosts said. 14. And so I drove them away over all nations, which they knew not, and the land was laid waste behind them, that no one went through and returned; and so they made the precious land a desert.

VIII. 1. And the word of Yahveh of hosts came thus: 2. Thus says Yahveh of hosts: I am on fire for Zion with

cf. Jer. vii. 6; Isa. i. 17; Ex. xxii. 21 f., xxiii. 6 f.; Deut. xxiv. 17 f., etc. Properly, let not *every one* muse on *the evil of his* neighbour; *i.e.* let no one meditate what would injure his neighbour; cf. viii. 17 and the law of Lev. xix. 17 f. Ver. 11. They offered *an obstinate shoulder*. The figure is taken from a stubborn ox, that will not submit to the yoke (such is the law of God); cf. Hos. iv. 16, where one plainly sees the original meaning of this סרר. Then Neh. ix. 29 came from the present passage.—Their *ears they made heavy*, dull, deaf, cf. with Isa. vi. 10, lix. 1. Ver. 12. *Adamant*, still stronger than the "stony" heart, Ezek. xi. 19, xxxvi. 26. The diamond is the hardest stone, cf. Jer. xvii. 1. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxxvii. 15: duritia (adamantis) inenarabilis est. They made their heart, the inner organ of perception, quite unsusceptible to the impressions of God's word. The divine Torah is here distinguished from the prophetic words; the written law is therefore meant: cf. Hos. viii. 12.—קצף, cf. i. 2. Ver. 13. From the account respecting God's words the prophet passes gradually to God's direct words, and the latter pass from the standpoint of the past to that of the present. Ver. 14. ואסערם, Piel, strangely vocalised: cf. Ewald, *Gr.* § 235*b*. For the rest, with Hitzig the narrative vav consecut. should perhaps be read.—ו׳מעבר, as in ix. 8 and Ezek. xxxv. 7. —The subject to וישיבו is the fathers, who by their guilt have brought about the devastation of the beautiful land.

Chapter VIII.

Ver. 1 ff. Here, as in ver. 18, there is only a new phase of the same discourse, passing into promise. Ver. 2. כה אמר,

great zeal, and in great fury I am zealous for them. 3. Thus says Yahveh: I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and Jerusalem shall be called "the city of faithfulness;" and the mountain of Yahveh of hosts "the holy mountain." 4. Thus says Yahveh of hosts: Again shall old men and old women sit in the open places of Jerusalem, every one his staff in his hand for multitude of days. 5. And the open places of the city shall be filled with boys and girls playing in its open places. 6. Thus says Yahveh of hosts: If things happen too wonderful in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, should it also be too wonderful in mine eyes? is the oracle of Yahveh of hosts. 7. Thus says Yahveh of hosts: Behold, I will redeem my people from the land of the rising and from the land of the setting of the sun; 8. and bring them, that they may dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in faithfulness and righteousness.

repeated ten times in this chapter; always introducing comforting assurances.—קנאתי ל, as in i. 14. Ver. 3. שבתי, prophetic perfect of assurance. עיר האמת (cf. Isa. i. 21): *city of faithfulness.* This implies both that it preserves faithfulness to its Lord, and that in consequence of this it enjoys true security. Ver. 4. Thus through the blessing and preserving care of God as many old people will be again seen in Jerusalem as in the most peaceful days of the city; cf. the still stronger saying in Isa. lxv. 20. Ver. 5. In the same way a numerous and cheerful youthful population, likewise a sign of divine goodwill. Ver. 6. פלא, Niph., to look wonderful, incredible, impossible.—גם for הֲגַם (1 Sam. xxii. 7). Hitz., Köhl. differently, but not better. The right understanding depends on the consideration, that the judgment of this *remnant of the people,* as to conceivable and inconceivable, belongs to the present; on the other hand, the object of this judgment (the fulfilment of this promise) to the future (בימים ההם); thus = "if that which shall take place in those days seems too wonderful to this remnant of the nation." Ver. 7. *My people;* observe the title of honour, Hos. ii. 3, 25. —*Rising and setting,* embrace here the whole world, Ps. l. 1; Mal. i. 11. Ver. 8. On the mutual relation of God and Israel, see Comm. on Jer. vii. 23.—*In faithfulness* or truthfulness and *righteousness,* intimates that the newly-confirmed covenant will now be faithfully kept on both sides, especially by the people,

9. Thus says Yahveh of hosts: Let your hands be strong, who in these days have heard these words from the mouth of the prophets, who (appeared) on the day when the house of Yahveh of hosts, the temple, was founded, in order to be built. 10. For before these days there was no hire for man, and the hire for cattle came to nothing; and whoever went in and out had no peace for the oppressor: and I set all men one against another. 11. But now I am not as in former days to the remnant of the people, is the oracle of Yahveh of hosts. 12. But the seed is sure*; the vine shall yield its fruit, and the earth give her increase, and the heavens dispense their dew; and I cause this remnant of the people to inherit all this. 13. And it shall come to pass, like as you were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house

of whom hitherto this was not true; cf. Hos. ii. 21 f. Ver. 9 ff. In import parallel to Hag. ii. 15–19.—Let *your hands* be *strong*, confident, and active, namely first of all in the temple-building; they still need encouragement to carry on this work steadily and diligently. *In these days*, namely of the temple-building. The *prophets* are Haggai and Zechariah.—אשר, without verb: those then present, on the *foundation-day*, i.e. the day so named in Hag. ii. 15, 18, and distinguished by a double discourse of Haggai. Ver. 10. As in Hag. i. 6, 10 f., ii. 10–19, the unfortunate state is conceded prevailing before that epoch, which now already belongs to the past. At present the improvement is marked. The *hire of man*, i.e. the product of his work and toil; *hire of beast* is its fodder earned by its labour; this, too, was wanting, Hag. i. 11. איננה, with fem. suff., is strange, conceived more generally: there was nothing. —God also caused dissension among the people.—הצר, pausal form for הַצַּר, personal (Syr.), not abstract, "distress" (LXX, Vulg.).—שלח, Piel, as in 2 Kings xxiv. 2, sent one after the other, inflamed one against another. Ver. 11. Present and future, represented by ועתה, are in contrast with the *former days*, before the building began. Ver. 12. כי זרע השלום, difficult. To take it as a prefixed apposition to the next, so that the vine would be described as a growth (?) of peace (Hitz. *et al.*), is too harsh. Better Targ., Syr.: The seed will be sure, which, however, requires a change in the text, at least הזרע ישלום. Heaven and earth shall display God's goodwill, recalls Hos. ii. 23 ff. Ver. 13. *A curse* is the unhappy one, whose evil fate

of Israel, so will I save you, and you shall be a blessing: fear ye not, let your hands be strong. 14. For thus says Yahveh of hosts: Like as I thought to do you evil, as your fathers had provoked me, says Yahveh of hosts, and did not repent; 15. so again I have thought in these days to show good to Jerusalem and the house of Judah: fear ye not. 16. These are the things which you shall do: Speak uprightly every one with his neighbour: practise sterling and peaceable righteousness in your gates. 17. And devise not evil every one against his neighbour in your hearts; and love not a treacherous oath: for all these things do I hate, is Yahveh's oracle.

18. And the word of Yahveh of hosts came to me as follows: 19. Thus says Yahveh of hosts: The fasting of the fourth, and the fasting of the fifth, and the fasting of the seventh, and the fasting of the tenth (month) shall be to the house of Judah pleasure and joy, and cheerful feasts. But love faithfulness and peace. 20. Thus says Yahveh of hosts: (It) yet (comes to pass), that peoples shall come, and the inhabitants of many cities. 21. And the inhabitants of one

one wishes his bitterest enemies; *a blessing* is one whose happy lot we wish our best friends as the most worthy object of desire; cf. Jer. xxix. 22; Gen. xlviii. 20. Ver. 14 f. Cf. Jer. xxxi. 28. ולא נחמתי, cf. Jer. iv. 28. Ver. 15. The second opposite purpose will just as certainly be accomplished as the first one was irrevocable. Only Jerusalem-Judah shall one day share in these benefits, whereas to Israel (ver. 13) the same shall open, only later, on the completion of the deliverance. Ver. 16 f. Cf. vii. 9 f. Ver. 17. את כל א', accus., dependent on the following שנאתי; still the construction is departed from. Ver. 19. Here all the fast-days, springing from the Chaldæan catastrophe, are named. In the *fourth* month falls the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, Jer. xxxix. 2, lii. 6, on the ninth day. For the rest, at a later date, the seventeenth of Thammuz was kept as a fast. Of the *fifth* and *seventh* month, see above on vii. 3, 5.—In the *tenth* month fell the beginning of the siege, on the tenth day (2 Kings xxv. 1).—For delight, i.e. *merriment* and *joy*=festive joy, occasion of mirth.—מועדים ט', good, good-signifying, so joyous feasts.—*Love* for *faithfulness* and *peace*, again enforced. Ver. 20. עמים, entire peoples.—*Numerous*, i.e. populous cities. Ver. 21. עוד אשר, a time yet

shall go to another with the words, Up! Let us go to pacify the face of Yahveh, and to seek Yahveh of hosts: "I will go also." 22. And many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek Yahveh of hosts at Jerusalem, and to pacify the face of Yahveh. 23. Thus says Yahveh of hosts: In these days (it comes to pass), that ten men out of all tongues of the heathen shall take a Jew by the skirt, with the words: We will go with you, for we have heard God is with you.

Exposition.

Contents of chs. vii., viii. The Question of Fasting. 1. The Occasion of the Discourse, vii. 1–3; 2. What has been lacking hitherto, vii. 4–14; 3. How Grace and Joy enter Jerusalem, viii.: *a.* The Happy Jerusalem of the future, viii. 1–8; *b.* Encouragement and Admonition to the Jerusalem of the present, vv. 9–17; *c.* The Future Centre of the World, vv. 18–23.

At the time of this discourse (fourth year of Darius) the temple-building, which was completed in the sixth year of this monarch (Ezra vi. 15), must have been already far advanced. This fact, and the lapse of seventy years since the ruin of the old temple, suggested the question, whether the overthrow of the latter should be lamented any longer as was done on certain fast-days. Such an inquiry from the people coming to Jerusalem was the human occasion to the prophet of an extended discourse on the past, the present, and the future. Starting from the question proposed, he

comes when, or it shall come to pass that.—אישר, as in ver. 23. —חלות את פני יי, see on vii. 2.—אני אלכה גם is the answer of the single city or population addressed. This does not refer merely to festal pilgrimages, although the heathen will take part in these (Zech. xiv. 16), but generally they will seek the way to the God of Israel, as ver. 23 confirms. Ver. 23. אישר, as in ver. 21: It shall happen that. יחזיקו again resumed by והחזיקו.—The number *ten*, as opposed to *one*, denotes the greatest conceivable number in this case as in Lev. xxvi. 26.

insists that the question does not bear on what is most essential in God's sight, and in opposition thereto expounds what is necessary in order to secure God's approval and the nation's welfare. In regard to fasting, the good evangelical doctrine is taught in ver. 6, that it has no value in itself in God's sight, and therefore its effect is not on God, but simply on man, who has to consider whether it will be useful to him to fast or to eat. (Jerome early well compares on the whole Isa. lviii. 5 ff.) In a significant way, therefore, the real question how this custom should be dealt with in the near future, is not even answered, because God does not wish by His representative to prescribe anything on the subject. On the other hand, God's abundant revelation of grace is promised for a future not more precisely defined in point of time, which will transform fast-days into feast-days, for which, above all, ethical conditions are laid down. Only if the people keep the commands, whose neglect once brought their fathers into disfavour (vii. 7 ff.), the commands of justice, faithfulness, peaceableness, love of man (viii. 6 f., 19), can and will the Lord bring in Jerusalem's wondrously glorious future. The blessed state of this city is charmingly pictured in ver. 3 ff.: In it, the true city of God, lofty age and playful youth will be found united; the former a sign of good, lasting peace, the latter a pledge of divine blessing and hope for the future. Ver. 13 passes from the promise, that this nation will be an example of God's favour as it has been previously of His displeasure, to the importance which Jerusalem's happiness will have for all nations, of which ver. 18 ff. speaks explicitly: The heathen will be so affected by the divine salvation there enjoyed, that, full of impatient longing, they will set out for this city of God's presence; nay, ten men will assault a Jew, who has lived with them in exile, with the prayer: Let him take them with him that they also may have part in that treasure of grace. As to matter, cf. Isa. ii. 2 ff., lxvi. 23; Jer. iii. 17; Zech. xiv. 16 ff. In this delineation, especially ver. 23,

strong expression is given to the longing of the heathen to break away from their empty fancies and come to the true, living God. The fulfilment is given in the N. T. But the preceding discourse, like the book of Zechariah in general, closes here auspiciously, the antagonism between Israel and the heathen world, which has pervaded the whole, being harmoniously settled. This is done by Jerusalem, which is now reconciled with God, becoming the centre of the heathen world which is turning to God.

The Messianic Kingdom of God after the Judgment on God's People, Chs. ix.–xi.

Chapter IX.

IX. 1. Oracle, word of Yahveh concerning the land of Hadrach, and on Damascus it settles down—for Yahveh has an eye upon men, and upon all the tribes of Israel,—2. And Hamath also, which borders thereon, Tyre and Sidon, because

Ver. 1. משא, see Comm. on Jer. xxiii. 33; here with the appositional addition יי דבר (as in xii. 1; Mal. i. 1), by which it is still more definitely marked out as a word of the Lord.—חדרך (here only), explained symbolically by the Rabbins from חַד and רַךְ: sharp-mild; so still Hengst., Klief., Keil, in allusion to the Medo-Persian empire, which was made up of hard and soft parts (?). The word is not known as the proper name of a king; we might rather think of a god, שדרך, Dan. i. 7. So Ew., Köhl., who compare Adrammelech.—But as the context rather favours a geographical name, so it has now been discovered in the list of Assyrian governments (Schrader, ii. 153; Riehm, *Handwörterb.*, § 551), where a land of Hatarika is mentioned, and indeed once after an account about Damascus, and another time before an account about Arpad. We must undoubtedly think of a Syrian district, which cannot, however, be more closely defined.—The suff. in מנחתו refers to דבר, cf. Isa. ix. 7; Zech. vi. 8.—עין, genit. obj., cf. iv. 10. God as little leaves the heathen world out of sight as any tribe of Israel. Ver. 2. *Hamath* borders on Damascus, Ezek. xlvii. 16.—Tyre and Sidon, see Ezek. xxvi. 2, xxviii. 21, as to their renowned *wisdom*, Ezek. xxviii. 4. Their wisdom and craft, on which

she is very wise. 3. And Tyre built herself a stronghold, and heaped up silver like dust, and gold like mire of the street. 4. Behold, the Lord will conquer her, and smite her power by the sea, but she herself will be consumed by fire. 5. Ashkelon shall see it and be afraid, Gaza also, and tremble greatly, and Ekron, because her confidence failed. And the king vanishes from Gaza, and Ashkelon remains uninhabited. 6. And the bastard dwells at Ashdod, but I will root out the pride of the Philistines. 7. And I will take away the blood from his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth: and he shall also be left over for our God, and be as a chieftain in Judah

they pride themselves so much, provokes the judgment. Ver. 3. מצור, stronghold for defence and offence, chosen here on account of the paronomasia, applies to the island of Tyre; see Ezek. xxvi. 2. As to the wealth of Tyre, cf. Ezek. xxviii. 4 f. Ver. 4. חיל suggest chiefly the fleet, in which the wealth as well as the power of the Tyrians lay; otherwise the fortifications also might be so called (מצור, ver. 3). Ver. 5. Tyre being overthrown by an enemy coming from the north, terrifies the *Philistine* cities greatly, as they hoped that those fortresses would prevent him penetrating to the south. These cities, Gath being omitted, as in Amos i. 6 ff. תרא והירא, assonance. These words are to be supplied in part to the following city-names. Ver. 6. ממזר, according to Deut. xxiii. 3, one born out of marriage, bastard; here LXX (Vulg., Targ.): ἀλλογενής, foreigner, seemingly no equal of the proud Philistines. Yet the meaning is not really that strangers come in, but that only people of the most wretched class, of doubtful origin, dwell there, after God has destroyed the pride of the Philistines, *i.e.* the noble races. Ver. 7. The suffixes, like the following גם־הוא, apply to the remnant left behind in Philistia (ממזר). God will wean it from heathen modes of life. The expression שקציו points to idolatry, flesh offered to idols, which it partakes of; in the same way its eating of blood contradicts the ancient precept, Gen. ix. 4, imposed afterwards even on proselytes of the gate (who at least were not allowed to eat pieces of living animals, Herzog, xii. 300), as on Gentile Christians, Acts xv. 29.—*Like a chieftain in Judah;* the surviving king of mean blood is incorporated in the kingdom of Judah as a subordinate prince.—*Like the Jebusites,* who perhaps stood to the Jerusalemites in a similar relation of service and alliance to that of the Gibeonites according to

and Ekron, like the Jebusite. 8. And I will encamp as a guard* to my house against those that go through and return, and no oppressor shall overrun them any more; for now have I seen with mine eyes.

9. Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, thy king comes to thee—just and having salvation is he, lowly, and he rides on an ass and on a colt, the foal of asses. 10. And I will root out the chariot

Josh. ix. Ver. 8. In מצבה the Massora takes ה for א: as a guard against hosts. Better read מִצָּבָה.—*For mine house*, i.e. land, as in Hos. viii. 1. Ver. 9. Cf. Zeph. iii. 14; Zech. ii. 14. גילי, as Massora observes, exceptionally with tone on the last. —בת־ציון, see Comm. on Isa. i. 8.—*Thy* king, no foreign ruler, but the one appointed thee by God.—לך = אֱלֹהַיִךְ, not dat. comm.— צדיק, fundamental attribute of a good ruler; cf. Ps. lxxii. 1 ff.— נושע, not active = σώζων (LXX, Targ., Syr., Vulg.), which would have been expressed by Hiphil, as in Isa. xlv. 21 God is called צדיק ומושיע. The part. Niph. means: to Him help, deliverance comes (always) from God; to Him is imparted that which the hosanna asks for the Messianic king from God. As the recipient of blessing, He also imparts it to men.—עני on Amos viii. 4. The lowliness, yea poverty, shown in His outward appearance, is a pledge of His condescension to the poor; the animal on which He rides, a pledge of His peaceableness and condescension. The *ass* is in contrast with the horse, the animal used by kings in riding and driving, Jer. xvii. 25, xxii. 4, but especially adapted for war; cf. ver. 10. The eye rests with pleasure on the young ass, hence the pleonastic description: and on a foal, a colt of she asses; the latter a plur. of the class: a foal such as she asses bear; cf. Gen. xlix. 11. Ver. 10. LXX, Stade, והכרית, to smooth. Destruction of all war implements, as in Isa. ix. 4. Still here and in Micah v. 9, which perhaps arose from this passage, the disarming of God's people is emphasised, and indeed first of Ephraim, which therefore at the time apparently rejoiced in considerable military strength.— דבר, not properly to command (Hitz.), which it never signifies. His mere word suffices to make peace, cf. Isa. ii. 4.—*From sea to sea*, etc., springs from Ps. lxxii. 8. The gaze stretches from the Mediterranean, forming the western boundary, to the other eastern end of the earth, where it was regarded as also girt by a sea; then from the Euphrates, the eastern limit of the Solomonic kingdom, to the western end of the earth. In this way

from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle-bow is rooted out; and he will command peace to the heathen nations; and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. 11. I will also, as concerns thee, because of thy covenant-blood send forth thy prisoners from the pit, wherein is no water. 12. Return to the stronghold, O prisoners of hope! I also announce to you to-day: I will repay thee double. 13. For I have stretched Judah for me as a bow, I have filled Ephraim; and I stir up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Javan, and make thee like the sword of a mighty man. 14. And Yahveh will appear above them, and his arrow shall go forth like the lightning. And the Lord Yahveh will blow the trumpet and march in tempests of the south. 15. Yahveh of hosts shall shield them, and they shall consume, treading down the sling stones, and drink, raging as with wine, and shall be filled like

really all limits are abolished. That this, in fact, is the meaning, is shown by Ps. lxxii. 11, 19. Ver. 11. By אתּ Israel is addressed. גם belongs, according to the sense, to the verb: I will also, as concerns thee.—*In virtue of the blood of thy covenant*, because of the covenant ratified by blood, which I once made with thee, Ex. xxiv. 3 ff.—Waterless cisterns often used as prisons, Gen. xxxvii. 24. The reference is to prisoners of war (אסירים, ver. 12) in strange lands, such as Obad., Joel, and Amos knew already, Obad. 20; Joel iv., and Amos i. Ver. 12. בצרון, strong towers where they are safe against foes, here means the land. —*Prisoners of hope*, in hope, as members of the covenant-people, cannot remain prisoners for ever.—גם here also, according to the sense, belonging to the verb (מגיד).—A twofold recompense is promised the community (לך, as in ver. 11) for its loss and suffering; cf. Isa. lxi. 7. Ver. 13. Yahveh, as a man of war, takes revenge.—*Ephraim* is the quiver, the object filled, as in Ps. cxxvii. 5—*Javan*, as in Joel iv. 6, directs to the west, where the most distant captives were.—*Zion* his *sword*. Ver. 14. עליהם refers to the covenant-people, as the following verse shows. —*Storms from the south* in Palestine are specially severe, because rushing from the broad southern, more precisely south-eastern, desert; cf. Job xxxvii. 9. Ver. 15. They *consume*, namely, their foes, whose blood they *drink*, while they press forward without halting under Yahveh's protection, and trample under foot all the weapons hurled against them. They roar in

sacrificial bowls, like corners of an altar. 16. And Yahveh, their God, will save them on that day as the flock of his people, for (they are) stones of a diadem, glittering on his land. 17. For how stately it is, and how fair it is! The corn makes youths and the wine maidens flourish.

X. 1. Ask ye of Yahveh rain at the time of the latter rain: Yahveh it is who prepares lightnings, and will give them torrents of rain, to every one grass in the field. 2. For the teraphim speak emptiness, and the diviners see falsehood, and they tell vain dreams, they dispense windy comfort. Therefore they shall break up like a flock, shall suffer, because

wild excitement with the drink, as with wine, *are filled* with blood like. . . . Klostermann (*Theol. Liter. Ztg.* 1879, p. 564), instead of ואכלו, requires וְיִכָּלוּם (cf. LXX, Targ.); דָּמָם instead of המו; וכהישו instead of וכבשו, they, the stones, miss their aim,—clear improvements, but also weaker forms. Ver. 16. *He will save them as the flock of His people*, i.e. because they are His people, His flock, whom He succours as the good Shepherd (the figure used in ch. xi.). — נסם, Hithpo., to be elevated, raise oneself up; of precious stones glistening on a dark ground. The diadem set therewith is the Holy Land. The suff. אדמתו may apply to Yahveh, but, according to ver. 17, is perhaps to be referred to the nation. Ver. 17. The suffixes refer, not to God (Ewald), but to the nation, which God causes to flourish with youthful vigour and beauty by richly blessing its country. The young men draw their strength from the excellent wheat, the maidens their blooming appearance from the fiery wine.

Chapter X.

Ver. 1. *Latter rain*, as in Joel ii. 23. The promise of ix. 17 leads the prophet on to the exhortation of x. 1. Only from Yahveh are they to expect and ask blessing. The false gods only deceive.—מטר־גשם, abundant rain, as in Job xxxvii. 6.—להם: the address has come to an end. Ver. 2. The *teraphim*, Ezek. xxi. 36, and Ed. König, *Offenbarungsbegriff*, ii. 149.—*Soothsayers*, who practise the different branches of divination or oracle-giving; cf. קסם, Ezek. xxi. 26. This soothsaying is plainly still in vogue, whereas little is heard of it after the exile.—נסע, used especially of the shepherd with the flock (Jer. xxxi. 24), here of involuntary departure into exile.—ענה, here to be bowed down, cf. עָנִי. We refer these two verbs to the

there is no shepherd. 3. Against the shepherds my wrath is kindled, and the goats I will punish; for Yahveh of hosts will visit his flock, the house of Judah, and make them his stately horse in battle. 4. From him shall go forth the pillar, from him the nail, from him the battle-bow, from him every ruler. 5. And they shall be like mighty men, who stamp down street-mire in the battle, and fight, because Yahveh is with them, that they may be put to shame who ride on horses. 6. And I make the house of Judah strong, and save the house of Joseph, and I make them return; for I have mercy on them, and they shall be as if I had not cast them off; for I am Yahveh, their God, and will answer them. 7. And they of Ephraim shall be like a mighty man, and their heart shall rejoice as with wine, and their children shall see it and rejoice; their heart shall exult in Yahveh. 8. I will hiss for them,

future. A catastrophe is advancing, which is unknown to all the soothsayers who promise good fortune. If the reference were to the past, it would have to be understood of a partial banishment, as under Tiglath-pileser, 2 Kings xv. 59, with which then Zech. x. 10 must be compared.—אין רעה recalls Hos. x. 3, 15, xiii. 10 f. Ver. 3. The *shepherds* and *goats* are the princes and mighty ones in the nation, who neglect their duty and abuse their authority, of course not heathen princes, as Hengst., Klief., Köhler supposed, because the description does not fit Zerubbabel's days.—פקד, the second time *in bonam partem*. —God makes Judah His proud, high-spirited battle-horse, reminding altogether of ix. 13 ff. Ver. 4. ממנו, according to Hos. viii. 4, to be referred to Yahveh: From Him proceeds all power, in opposition to the revolutionary arrogance of the present, when those who are not called soar to power.—*Pillar*, see on Isa. xix. 13.—*Nail*, synonymous figure: one on whom others depend; cf. Isa. xxii. 24 f.—The *battle-bow* = military power.—Every *driver*, bailiff who overlooks the work. Ver. 5. בוסים, instead of בָּסִים, cf. קוֹמִים, 2 Kings xvi. 7. What they tread down like street-mire are the foes, reminding vividly of ix. 15. Ver. 6. והושבותים from ישב or שוב? In the former case הוֹשַׁבְתִּים (Hos. xi. 11) should be read, in the latter הֲשִׁבוֹתִים, as in ver. 10, cf. Ezek. xxxvi. 11. The latter is to be preferred. Ver. 7. Ephraim, now so weak and abject, will be like a hero in strength, and full of joy and energy.—כמו־יין, cf. ix. 15. Ver. 8. *Hissing*, as an alluring call, Isa. v. 26. Ver. 9 shows

and gather them, because I have redeemed them; and they shall be numerous as they were. 9. And I will scatter them among the nations, and they shall remember me in the far countries, and shall continue in life with their children, and return. 10. And I cause them to come back from the land of Egypt, and from Asshur I will gather them together, and to the land of Gilead and to Lebanon I will lead them; and it shall not suffice for them. 11. And distress covers the sea; and he smites the waves in the sea, that all the depths of the Nile-river dry up, and the haughtiness of Asshur comes down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall yield. 12. And I make them strong in Yahveh, and in his name shall they walk, says Yahveh.

XI. 1. Open thy gates, O Lebanon, that fire may consume thy cedars! 2. Howl, cypress, because the cedar is fallen, because the stately ones are laid waste! Howl, ye oaks of Bashan, because the forest, the inaccessible one, is fallen down.

that in the main the exile is still future. Ver. 10. *Egypt* and *Assyria* are mentioned as lands of the exile, just as in Hosea (xi. 11). The land of *Gilead* and *Lebanon*, as the districts most exposed to the foe, will be first depopulated.—מצא, Niph., like Kal elsewhere (Num. xi. 22; Judg. xxi. 14): The land will not suffice for them when they return with their numerous offspring. Ver. 11. The bringing home of the captives, as elsewhere, is described in similar terms to the departure from Egypt through the Red Sea. The sea is restricted, its waters dried up, that they may pass through, and the power of the enemy sinks, as in Ex. xv. 5. The Nile-stream is mentioned as representing Egypt, deviating from the historical type.—Klostermann, Stade would read צֹרָה instead of צָרָה, "goes through the sea to Tyre" (?). Ver. 12. God speaks of Himself in the first person; nevertheless ביהוה is added (as in Hos. i. 7) in order to insist emphatically in whom they shall find their strength.

Chapter XI.

Vv. 1, 2. *Lebanon* surrenders of necessity, and is stripped of its beauty like the east-Jordan land (ver. 2): cf. on x. 10. The proud trees poetically bewail their fate. They are not to be allegorised offhand, as if Israelite magnates were meant thereby: cf. Isa. xxxvii. 24; Hab. ii. 17. הַבָּצִיר, to be read with Kethib: the inaccessible wood, really wood cut off; it is a partic. used

3. Hark, lamenting of shepherds, because their splendour is laid waste! Hark, mourning of young lions, because the pride of Jordan is laid waste!—4. Thus has Yahveh, my God, said: Feed the sheep of the slaughter-bench, 5. whose buyers slaughter them without having to suffer penalty, and their sellers say: "Blessed be Yahveh, that I am rich!" and their shepherds spare them not. 6. For I will no longer spare the inhabitants of the land, is Yahveh's oracle; and behold, I will cause the men to fall every one into the hand of his neighbour, and into the hand of his king, and they shall break the land in pieces; and I will not deliver out of their hand. 7. Then I fed the sheep of the slaughter-bench, verily the most miserable of the sheep; and I took me two staves: the one I called "Wellbeing," the other I called "Treaty;" and

adjectivally. Just in such a case the article is often wanting with the substantive (Ges. § 111, 2*a*). Ver. 3. Already the prophet hears men and beasts lamenting, because heavily smitten by the invasion: the *shepherds* (not to be understood allegorically, as in the secondary passage, Jer. xxv. 34 f.), whose glorious pastures (אדרתם) in the east-Jordan land are devastated; and the young *lions* (also meant literally), which have been scared from the high undergrowth (גאון) of the Jordan. Ver. 4. The prophet receives from God the charge to be a shepherd of the people, which is called a *flock of slaughter*, because, according to x. 3, it was simply plundered and devoured by its shepherds, as ver. 5 explains. Ver. 5. The suffixes, plur. fem., only once masc., apply to the sheep. Ver. 6. The Lord will enter into judgment with the *inhabitants of the land* in general; therefore He gives His flock to the prophet to feed. The rest will not be spared. Others understand by those destined to judgment, the inhabitants of the *earth*, in distinction from the nation of Israel, which is entrusted to the keeping of the good shepherd. But ver. 11 shows that in this nation itself only a portion formed the prophet's flock. Ver. 7. לָכֵן, here not = therefore, but = in truth, properly = this being so, in reality. Stade, לִכְנַעֲנֵי הַצֹּאן; just so ver. 10 (cf. LXX: εἰς τὴν Χαναανῖτιν and οἱ Χαναναῖοι): the "Canaanites of the flock" are the bad rulers (??).—לאחד for לְאֶחָד, not stat. constr.—נֹעַם, loveliness, grace, favour. His aim is the comfort, wellbeing, advantage of the flock. How different with the bad shepherds!—חֹבָלִים, plural of abstractness (from חבל, to turn, twist, join together):

so I fed the sheep. 8. And I cut off the three shepherds in one month. Then was my soul impatient with them, and their soul also was weary of me. 9. Then I said: I will not feed you—what is to die, let it die; and what to perish, let it perish; and they that are left, let them devour each one the other's flesh. 10. And I took my staff "Wellbeing" and broke it in pieces, to break my covenant which I had made with all peoples. 11. Then it was broken on that day; and therefore the most miserable of the sheep, which regarded me, knew that it was Yahveh's word. 12. Then I said to them: If it is pleasing in your eyes, give me my hire; and if not, let it be! Then they weighed my hire: thirty silver

alliance. The special reference, according to ver. 14, is to an alliance with Judah, a good understanding with the sister kingdom. Ver. 8. The *three shepherds* must be three well-known kings who, on the menace of the prophet, were carried away in the brief space of a month by a higher power. Post-exilic events furnish scarcely any satisfactory explanation. On the other hand, the most probable reference is to that one month during which Shallum, the murderer of Zechariah, son of Jeroboam II., reigned; 2 Kings xv. 13. In this case, Zechariah and Shallum are two rich shepherds removed by prophetic direction; but in this case Menahem cannot be the third (against Hitzig), as he reigned ten years (2 Kings xv. 17). We must then rather suppose that yet a third pretender arose in that month without success. So also Ewald, Bleek.—The sheep were so little complaisant that the prophet-shepherd lost patience, and they too were soon weary of his strict yet loving control. Ver. 9. He will feed them no longer, although he knows that thus he gives up to destruction those whom he has preserved by his guidance. Ver. 10. As the prophet worked in place of God, he had been able, by a covenant with the nations (in the same way as in Hos. ii. 20), to secure to the flock unbroken outward prosperity (נעם). In his plenary authority he now broke this staff, *i.e.* declared the covenant or ban, which kept the nations quiet, abolished. Ver. 11. The effect was very obvious at once, the nations soon beginning to attack Israel. This is an allusion to political events of the most recent time. Hitzig refers to the invasion of the Assyrian Pul, 2 Kings xv. 19. Ver. 12. As the impression of this coincidence on the prophet's flock was no slight one, he left it to them whether, and how, they would at least suitably reward

shekels. 13. Then said Yahveh to me: Cast it into the temple-treasure,* the splendid price at which I was rated by them. Then I took the thirty silver shekels and cast them into Yahveh's house, into the temple-treasure.* 14. And I broke in pieces my second staff "Treaty," to break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.—15. Then said Yahveh to me: Take thee once more instruments of a shepherd, a careless one. 16. For behold I will make a shepherd arise in the land who will not go after the lost, nor seek the scattered; and will not heal what is broken, nor support what

him for the service done them. How different was his conduct from that of the former shepherds! But they weighed to him thirty shekels of silver. Hofmann: because he had fed them thirty days. Others refer to Ex. xxi. 32, according to which this was the value of a slave. Yet this passage would not explain the origin of the number. Rather must some fact have taken place. But in any case the reward given him was comparatively poor; see ver. 13. Ver. 13. הִשְׁלִיךְ, contemptuously, because the reward was so mean; they would have given it to none but their God. אדר היקר, ironically.—אל היוצר, according to what follows, is a particular place in the temple. Massora suggests the *potter* (LXX: *εἰς τὸ χωνευτήριον*, into the melting-furnace), which would imply that the money was to be applied to the meanest service in God's house, the preparing of earthen pots (Zech. xiv. 20) for the sacrificial seasons. But we should expect to find this more definitely stated. Better read הַיּוֹצֵר = הָאוֹצָר (cf. דוג for דואג, 1 Sam. xxii. 18), the *temple-treasure;* cf. Mal. iii. 10. So Syr. and most moderns; whilst Targ., Kimchi take it personally: treasure-keeper. That a collecting-place for money-gifts existed in the temple, like the *γαζοφυλάκιον* (Mark xii. 41) in later days, is quite probable. In any case the temple-treasure at Jerusalem is meant. If our prophet laboured in the northern kingdom, the supposition is probable that, after that dismissal, he withdrew to his own country. On the reference to the passion-history of Jesus, Matt. xxvii. 9 f., see Orelli, *O. T. Prophecy*, p. 250. Ver. 15. As to the form, cf. Hos. iii. 1.—אולי, foolish in the moral sense, forgetful of duty, loose; in ver. 17 he is called אֱלִיל, worthless, useless. What the implements of such a man consist of is not said; perhaps staves with opposite names are referred to. But the vagueness shows that the action was not carried out. Ver. 16. הִנֵּה, not

is sound; and will feast on the flesh of that which is fat, and tear their hoofs in pieces. 17. Woe, thou good-for-nothing shepherd, that forsakes the flock! A sword on his arm and his right eye! His arm shall be utterly withered, and his right eye utterly blind!

Exposition.

Contents of chs. ix.–xi. The Establishing of the Messianic Kingdom of God after the Judgment on Israel-Judah. 1. The Triumph of Zion over the World-powers, ch. ix.: *a.* Punishment of the Heathen Neighbours, vv. 1–8; *b.* The Godly and Humane King of Zion, ver. 9 f.; *c.* Deliverance and Prosperity of Israel, vv. 11–17; 2. The Divine Restoration of the House of Judah and Ephraim, ch. x.; 3. The Rejection of the Good Shepherd and the Judgment, ch. xi.

As to these three chapters, which clearly belong to one

that which is "young," as it is never used of animals,—and otherwise, also, this meaning would be unsuitable,—but from נער, to shake, subst. scattering, *abstract. pro concreto;* Hitz. reads part. Niph. הַנִּנְעָר for הַנְּעָר.—That which is *sound*, is the healthy in contrast with the broken and fallen.—The *tearing of the hoofs* scarcely refers to eating the hoof-fat (Köhl., Hitz. formerly), or to driving through stony tracts, which injures the hoofs (Ew., Hitz.); but to an outrage of bad shepherds, who perhaps maimed the hoofs of the sheep, that they might not wander far, and so grow fat and give the shepherds no trouble. So Neumann. The neglect of the bad shepherd is pictured in the form of climax: The sheep in peril he saves not by incurring danger himself; the lost he seeks not, because this would fatigue him; the injured he does not lovingly care for; for the sound there is not the slightest regard; the fat he even feeds on; and the lively he maims, that he may keep good eating for the future without trouble. Ver. 17. רעי, suff., because God set the bad shepherd over the people that deserved no better. Others take Chirek as in עזבי, Ges. § 90, 3.—האליל, see above on ver. 15.—חרב על, imprecatory clause, whose verbal idea is implied in על. The *right* eye is mentioned, in keeping with the right arm, as the more precious.

author, not being the work of the post-exilic Zechariah, but rather of pre-exilic origin, see Introd. p. 304 ff. Their many points of contact with Hosea, and what is said in ch. xi. of the prophet's appearance in days of anarchy, suggest that he was a younger contemporary of Hosea, and prophesied under Menahem in the northern kingdom. Yet he may, like Amos, have been Judæan in origin. At all events, he regards the southern kingdom, his sacred capital and royal house, with peculiar sympathy as the starting-point and centre of the blessed future. Although at present the ill-disposed neighbours in the east, north, and west rejoice at Israel's weakness, the tables will be turned. Their power will perish, whereas Israel's glory is only about to dawn under the sceptre of a great Son of David. Whilst Tyre, which is apparently impregnable, falls, and all the Philistine cities are seized with terror, nay, only a despised population remains there, which will be glad to be allowed to live under Judah's sceptre (vv. 1–8), its king enters Zion amid all the signs of peace and divine favour. If the above date is correct, here for the first time the personal form of the Messiah, *i.e.* of the perfect Son of David of the future, is sketched, in whom God will complete the revelation of His gracious counsels to Israel. Amos and Hosea referred in general terms to David's house and its auspicious future. But here (as soon by Isaiah and Micah) the ruler of the days of grace, predicted in Hos. iii. 5, is more precisely delineated as a Prince of peace, full of loving condescension, setting up by His mighty word a kingdom of peace, which will far surpass the Solomonic one in extent (ver. 9 f.). Then the captive Israelites return home to their brethren. The foes are subdued, which is depicted with great vividness, Yahveh Himself as a warrior leading His people to victory over the farthest heathen, who have done Him violence. We are at once forbidden to think of an ordinary war, fought with gross weapons, in presence of the picture in such strange contrast with this warlike scene, ver. 9 f.

Whereas in ch. ix. the seer found himself transported to the luminous heights of the blessed future, in ch. x. he stands from the first nearer to the present, to which he plainly turns in ver. 1. Just on this account, here the hindrances and difficulties opposing the work of the Lord among His own people, are discovered. It is true, the promise of the elevation of Israel to undreamt-of God-given power is here repeated. Ver. 3 ff. are parallel to ix. 13 ff. But the judgment is here more conspicuous in the foreground; this must be consummated on the two kingdoms, Ephraim and Judah, before the hour of redemption can strike, when the Lord will gather and bring them back from Egypt and Assyria.

Finally, ch. xi. speaks entirely of the present and recent past, on which account accusation and threats of doom predominate. The fact that the land is lost beyond remedy, has brought home to the prophet his own experience with the people. In stormy days, probably during the confusion falling on the northern kingdom after the decease of Jeroboam II., when no dynasty stood firm, and the defenceless in the nation came like sheep for slaughter from one ruler to another, and were ill-treated and fleeced by every one, the prophet himself by Yahveh's direction assumed the shepherd's staff, *i.e.* the guidance of the portion of his people that accepted his word. What shape this theocratic government took, we know not. But it is plain that by the command of his God the prophet set himself two ends: the wellbeing of the ill-used people and the alliance of Ephraim with Judah; as in regard to the former, according to the revelations given in chs. ix. and x., the condition of salvation lay in adhesion to the Davidic kingdom. The prophet worked with energy for this end, so that in one month he removed three rulers or pretenders, who blocked his efforts, *i.e.* put a stop to them by the power of his prophetic teaching. But he had evil experiences with his own flock, even the better disposed in such days of universal corruption often showing themselves incap-

able with the best guidance of forming a nucleus for a better community. Their opposition made the shepherd weary of his office, as they on their part had enough of his holy, earnest control. He withdrew, thus abandoning them to the judgment which, without his intervention, would have burst in long before. First of all by a symbolical action, probably embodied in outward form (ver. 10), he declared the covenant with the nations which guarded Israel broken, and thus gave the heathen full authority to attack, which they at once did. Since this coincidence certainly made some impression on his community, he demanded of the latter a sign of recognition of his services, and received from it—thirty silver shekels! Thus have they in every form—but basely enough, when one considers who spoke and acted through him—dismissed the man of God. That the Lord Himself regarded Himself as thus paid off and sent away, is shown by a further symbolical action, the casting of the money into the temple-treasure. After this painful experience, which was also a grievous wrong against his God, the prophet broke his second staff, thereby putting an end to the brotherhood between Ephraim and Judah. This circumstance denotes an advance in the judgment, in comparison with ver. 10, as hereafter the two brother-kingdoms will tear each other to pieces. In fact, a few years later, King Pekah of Israel turned his weapons against Ahaz of Judah, and the latter again called in the Assyrians against the house of Israel. The bad shepherd, announced in ver. 15 ff., will be this Pekah, unless it is Menahem himself, under whom the prophet uttered and wrote this.

To think that everything related in ch. xi. of the shepherd-work of the prophet is mere literary embellishment or a visionary occurrence, is untenable. This chapter must refer to actual occurrences between him and his community, so that he really did for a time assume political control, although in a limited sphere. Even the two staves may have served as

symbolical insignia in this matter, and have been broken at a given time before the eyes of the community. In the same way, the paying off of the prophet with thirty silver shekels is matter of fact. But the prophet's appearance as a national leader plainly did not continue long, and left no trace behind in political history,—a highly significant type that in the future the truly good Shepherd, in whom the Lord most perfectly offered Himself as a leader to His people, would fare no better.

Judah and Jerusalem of the Future, Chs. xii.–xiv.

XII. 1. Oracle, word of Yahveh concerning Israel: Thus says Yahveh, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth, and formed the spirit of man within him: 2. Behold, I make Jerusalem a cup of reeling to all nations round about; and also against Judah it shall come in the siege against Jerusalem. 3. And it shall come to pass on that day, that I

Chapter XII.

Ver. 1. The heading as in ix. 1 seems to have been formed on the model of the latter by the compiler of the book, who then sought to indicate by עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל that here, in chs. xii.–xiv., not so much the heathen as the covenant-people are the subject of the prophecy. The prophecy is occupied only with Judah-Jerusalem, whereas the northern kingdom has vanished from sight.—The speaker is the God who has all power in heaven and on earth, because everything, the highest as well as that which is most secret, goes back to Him as its source. Ver. 2. *Cup of reeling*, i.e. full of stupefying drink. The nations round about snatch eagerly at it; but under God's governance it will turn to their hurt: they drink their own death. Cf. on the figure, Obad. 16 and elsewhere.—*Also against Judah it* (the distress) *will come* in the siege of Jerusalem, *i.e.* in this investment of the capital the country will not be spared. Hitzig differently: the judgment will also come on Judah, which, partly from compulsion, will join in the attack on the city; but this is imported from a misunderstanding of xiv. 14. Stade: "and Judah also will join in besieging Jerusalem," must first change the text to obtain this unsatisfactory meaning. Ver. 3. *A stone of burden*, on which all who try to lift it

make Jerusalem a stone of burden to all peoples: all that would lift it up shall be grievously wounded, and all nations of the earth shall gather together against it. 4. On that day, is the oracle of the Lord, I will smite every horse with stupor and his rider with madness; yet upon the house of Judah I will keep mine eyes open, but every horse of the nations I will smite with blindness. 5. And the chieftains of Judah shall say in their heart: The inhabitants of Jerusalem are a means of strength to me through Yahveh of hosts, their God. 6. On the same day I will make the chieftains of Judah like a pan of fire in the midst of a wood, and like a burning torch in a sheaf; and they shall consume all peoples round about on the right hand and on the left; but Jerusalem shall henceforward be inhabited in its place at Jerusalem. 7. And Yahveh shall save the tents of Judah first, that the pomp of the house of David and the pomp of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not grow too great against Judah. 8. On

will be hurt, corresponds to the cup of reeling, ver. 2, with which all will be drunk. The allusion is perhaps to a stone raised and thrown by young men in athletic exercise, as was observed by Jerome in Palestine, and may be seen in Syria to-day: Orelli, *Durchs heil. Land*, p. 247. Ver. 4. History supplies examples of such wild panics in cavalry forces, *c.g.* Ex. xiv. 24 f.; Judg. iv. 12; cf. Hag. ii. 22.—On the contrary, on the *house of Judah* the Lord will fix His loving, protecting eye, cf. Zech. iv. 10, ix. 1. Ver. 5. The *chieftains of Judah*, dwelling in the open country, hitherto often filled with envy of the capital (cf. ver. 7), will learn that it is guarded by higher power, and therefore will not succumb to the besiegers; they will thus be encouraged and stimulated to bolder action (ver. 6) by the powerful protection by which they see the defenders of Jerusalem encircled.—In אמצה the vocalising varies, see Baer here.—LXX, Targ. seem to have read ליושבי instead of לי י, and Gesenius and others approve; yet the Massoretic text is more emphatic. Ver. 6. With this knowledge and in God's strength the Jewish princes will fall on the foes, in the midst of whom they stand. These foes will perforce leave Jerusalem unmoved in its place, suits ver. 3 well. Ver. 7. By this heroic courage on the part of the princes, the country will be first delivered from the foe, that the city and the royal house may not boast against the country. Ver. 8. ינן, as in ix. 15. A wondrous

that day will Yahveh shield the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that stumbles among them shall in that day be like David and the house of David like heavenly beings, like the angel of Yahveh before them. 9. And it shall come to pass on that day, that I will seek to destroy all heathen nations who have come against Jerusalem.

10. And I will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of

strengthening of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will intervene: The weakest, not strong on his feet, will be as David, the hero, whose ankles shook not (Ps. xviii. 36).—כאלהים, like divine, superhuman, heavenly beings. The sense is as appellative and comprehensive as in Ps. viii. 5. The language is further specialised and also intensified by the clause: *like the angel of Yahveh, who goes before them* in battle; *i.e.* the angel of the divine presence, in whom the Lord reveals His peculiar nature. Ver. 9. Cf. Joel iv. 9 ff. While God destroys the hostile heathen, according to ver. 10 He shows favour to Judah; but in such a way that, first of all, He produces in the latter the penitence and contrition indispensable to salvation. Ver. 10. שפך ר׳, as in Joel iii. 1; Ezek. xxxix. 29.—*Spirit of grace*, who works grace on God's part, but on man's part *supplication for grace*, the indispensable condition for becoming partakers in it. This supplication again implies as its postulate insight into the enormous offence they have committed.—Deeply affected, they shall *look on me as him whom they pierced*. On את אשר, cf. Jer. xxxviii. 9 (Köhler). To avoid the offensive meaning, which makes God Himself the object of the murderous act, many codices read אליו instead of אלי, which, however, is decisively confirmed by the older reading and also by the versions (LXX, Vulg., Targ., Syr.). Also John xix. 37, Rev. i. 7, prove nothing for אליו, to which Ewald, Bunsen, Stade give the preference. The reading אֵלַי (J. D. Michaelis, Bleek) would at least require the erasure of את, but is otherwise altogether too tame. Finally, in order to escape the offence, דקרו has been changed into רקדו (so LXX, Targ.), or its meaning so weakened, as if it meant "wounded by revilings;" so Theodore of Mopsuestia, Calvin: metaphorice hic accipitur confixio pro continua irritatione. Similarly Grotius, Rosenmüller, Gesenius. But דקר nowhere has this transferred sense, and why there should be funeral mourning on account of such revilings, is incomprehensible.—We must rather accept the idea of a wrong done to Yahveh

supplication, and they shall look upon me as him whom they pierced, and shall mourn for him as one laments for an only son, and be in heaviness as one is in heaviness for a first-born. 11. On that day the mourning in Jerusalem shall be great, like the mourning for the dead of Hadad-Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo. 12. And the land shall mourn by

Himself after the close analogy of xi. 12 f.: They murdered, in His representative, the Lord Himself, who would fain have shown them the greatest love. Therefore, after discovering their infatuation, they begin to mourn for Him as for the dearest friend. The distinction of Yahveh from the murdered one, on the other hand, is intimated by the transition to the third person, עליו.—מרר, Hiphil intrinsically transitive, unless בְּכִי is to be supplied. Ver. 11. *The mourning for the dead of Hadad-Rimmon*, not for the sun-god Hadad-Rimmon, Adonis (Hitz.). To the objection, on grounds of language and the history of religion, raised by Baudissin (*Studien*, i. 295 ff.) against the latter explanation, should be added, that it would be most incongruous for a prophet to use the Adonis-mourning, which was an abomination to all earnest Israelites (Ezek. viii. 14) because of its heathen character, as an example of deep effectual sorrow for sin.—On the contrary, in correspondence with the city of Jerusalem, Hadad-Rimmon is a place in the plain of Megiddo, where, 609 B.C., the favourite king, Josiah, was defeated and mortally wounded; he was mourned as few kings were, 2 Chron. xxxv. 20 ff.; 2 Kings xxiii. 29 f. This is confirmed by the fact that, according to the statement of Jerome, Adad-remmon in his days was a city in the neigbourhood of Jezreel, then called Maximianopolis; and that still to-day this place can be pointed out under the name of Rummâneh, a little to the north-west of Tannuk (= Taanach, Judg. v. 19), south-east of El Lejjim, which from Robinson's time has been taken for Megiddo. Thus the present passage states more exactly than the historical books the place within the plain of Megiddo where the catastrophe took place. The king dying, according to Chronicles, in Jerusalem makes no change in the fact that the mourning took its rise in Hadad-Rimmon. Even if its yearly repetition, which is certain from 2 Chron. xxxv. 25 (cf. also Jer. xxii. 10, 18), took place, not on the battlefield, but in Jerusalem, it might easily be designated the mourning of Hadad-Rimmon, because the king lamented fell there with his people. Ver. 12. This mourning will not merely be a national one, but also by families, as every *family*,

families apart: the family of the house of David apart and their wives apart, the family of the house of Nathan apart and their wives apart, 13. the family of the house of Levi apart and their wives apart, the family of Shimei apart and their wives apart; 14. all the other families by families apart and their wives apart.

XIII. 1. On that day a fountain shall be opened, for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin

and first the Davidic one, will lament the violent death of the one in question, as if he were its own beloved head. The *women* also are specially named, not merely as taking a prominent part in all funeral mourning, but because they will feel themselves involved in the guilt of what has taken place. The house of *Nathan*, not that of the prophet, as though his disciples or followers were meant, as here families in the proper sense are meant, and the prophets formed no such distinct body. Rather a particular branch of the Davidic house is meant, which took its rise from the son of David mentioned in 2 Sam. v. 14; Luke iii. 31. Why this branch is specially named it is impossible to say, because of our defective knowledge of the circumstances of the royal family then. The same applies to the distinction of the *Shimei family* from the chief family of *Levi*, which is brought forward alongside the royal family as the priestly one. For the first one certainly does not mean the posterity of the Benjamite, 2 Sam. xvi. 5, but that of the Levite named in Num. iii. 18 as there in iii. 21. משפחה signifies usually the subdivision of the tribes, but is also used of the whole tribe; the word, like the thing, indeed, is capable of differences of extension. Ver. 14. The rest, *according to families* apart, Ges. § 124, 2, Anm. 1.

Chapter XIII.

Ver. 1. *On that day*, applies to the point of time in view in xii. 10 ff. The first two ל = for the use of the house, etc.; the two following ל = for the removal of sin, etc.—חטאת (stat. constr.; cf. Ges. § 116, 4), actual sin; נדה, the state of impurity or sinfulness resulting from it. Cf. the Levitical use of these phrases, Num. xix. 9. Just as, according to that passage, an ethical background is assumed in the outward impurity, and therefore a removal of sin may be spoken of, so in the present passage, and very frequently, sinfulness is considered as a state of impurity; Ezek. xxxvi. 25; Ps. li. 3, 8, etc. Ver. 2*a*, after

and uncleanness. 2. And it shall come to pass on that day, is the oracle of Yahveh of hosts, that I will root out the names of the idols from the land, and they shall be mentioned no more; and I will also cause the prophets and the spirit of impurity to depart out of the land. 3. And it shall come to pass, when any one shall yet profess to be a prophet, his father and his mother, they that begat him, shall say to him: "Thou shalt not continue to live, for thou hast spoken deceit in the name of Yahveh;" and his father and his mother, they that begat him, shall thrust him through, if he shall prophesy. 4. And it shall come to pass at that time, that the prophets shall be ashamed, every one of his vision, if he would prophesy;

Hos. ii. 19. Along with idols the *prophets* can only mean false ones, as the old versions recognised. The predicate added to their *spirit* in the parallel clause confirms this: *spirit of impurity*, proceeding from impure, God-opposing powers. Ver. 3. Hitzig, Köhler remind us that, according to Joel iii. 1, Jer. xxxi. 34, in the Messianic age there will be no more need of special prophets; thus every one assuming this character will show that he is a false prophet. Yet this is scarcely the course of thought here. Ver. 2 refers only to the disappearance of false prophets, who plainly were the rule at that time. These, in that time of severe conscientiousness and divine enlightenment, will be unmasked and punished by their own parents. But the parents do not discover their guilt from their prophesying merely, but from their prophesying falsely. וּדקרהוּ, men will do to them what was done previously to the men of God (xii. 10). The severe law, Deut. xviii. 20, will be carried out on the guilty one by his own parents, with perfect disregard of all human considerations. Ver. 4. The consequence of this will be, that then no one will thrust himself into the prophet's office, as so many do now, uncalled. Whereas now the honour stimulates men to pretend visions and wear the prophet's mantle, then the shame and peril will deter therefrom: they will be ashamed to have visions, will disclaim them.—בהנבאתו (passing over from ל״א to ל״ה, Ges. § 75, Anm. 20, 21), if he would fain pass for a prophet, *i.e.* if the thought occurred to do so, fear of reproach would deter him.—*The mantle of coarse hair*, of undressed skins, was Elijah's token, 2 Kings i. 8; and from his days the prophets, up to John the Baptist, seem often to have worn this garb; but in the time of our prophet the outward attire seems mostly to have supplanted the inner calling, and

and shall not put on the hairy mantle in order to deceive. 5. And one will say: I am no prophet; I am a man that tills the earth; for some one has bought me, from my youth up. 6. And if one say to him: What mean, then, these wounds between thine hands? he shall say: So was I smitten in the house of my friends.

7. Sword, awake against my shepherd and against the man of my fellowship, says Yahveh of hosts; smite the shepherd, that the sheep may be scattered; and I will turn my hand against the little ones. 8. And it shall come to pass in the whole land, is Yahveh's oracle, two parts therein shall be rooted out, come to an end; and the third part shall be left

in this way the people were often deceived. Ver. 5. The subject of ואמר is the first, best one. No one will wish it said that he belongs to the order of prophets; rather he will assume the most despicable position, and profess to be a slave that was never free, in order to escape the suspicion of occupying himself with prophecy.—קנה, Hiphil, here = Kal, to buy, not to sell. Ver. 6. But the inquirer has good reason for discerning a prophet in the individual addressed: the scars which he bears on his breast (בין ידי) betray one. These plainly arose from self-mutilations, after the manner of 1 Kings xviii. 28. He will then allege a common brawl (certainly little creditable!) in order not to be taken for a prophet.—אשר, properly, *with which* I was smitten.—מאהבי are not the parents (he professes even to have been sold already as a boy), but friends. If the wounds actually sprang from piercing by his parents, ver. 3 (Hitz.), we must suppose that their blows, aimed at his life, did not prove fatal (?); but the one meant in ver. 5, whom the fate of ver. 5 overtook, is not of this kind. Ver. 7. עורי, Milra, contrary to rule, like גילי in ix. 9, for the sake of greater vividness. The appeal to the sword, as in xi. 17; which, however, must not mislead us into confounding the shepherd in question here, intimately one with Yahveh, with the dissolute one there. So Ew., Stade, *et al.*, who put vv. 7–9 after ch. xi. On the contrary, as to matter, the killing of the one mourned in xii. 10 is parallel.—עמית, elsewhere concretely for comrade, here in the original abstract sense: fellowship, society.—הך, for fem., the sword being addressed.—The *poor* sheep had their protection in this good shepherd, as in xi. 7. Ver. 8. פֶּה, properly mouth, mouthful; here used as a quantitative unity, by which the parts of the whole are reckoned,—a primitive way of

therein. 9. And I will bring the third part into the fire, and melt them as silver is melted, and purify them as gold is purified. He shall call on my name, and I will answer him. I say: He is my people; and he shall say: Yahveh, my God!

XIV. 1. Behold a day comes for Yahveh, when thy booty shall be divided within thee. 2. And I will gather all heathen nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city shall be taken, and the houses plundered, and the women ravished; and half of the city goes forth into captivity, but the remnant of the people shall not be rooted out of the city. 3. And Yahveh shall go forth and fight with these heathen as in the day when he fought, in the day of the battle-throng. 4. And his feet shall stand on the same day on the Mount of Olives, which stands before Jerusalem on the east side; and the Mount of Olives shall divide from its midst to the sunrise, and seaward, into a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove to the north, and the other half to the south. 5. And you shall flee into the valley of my moun-

expressing fragments. Ver. 9. Cf. the same figure, Jer. ix. 6 and often. 9*b* in Hosea's manner; cf. Hos. ii. 25. הוּא refers to the remnant of Israel.

Chapter XIV.

Ver. 1. *Thy booty*, taken from thee, is divided in thy walls, —a sign of Jerusalem's complete conquest, as ver. 2 confirms. Ver. 2. Instead of תשגלנה, Keri puts the less obscene תשכבנה. Despite xii. 8 ff., the conquest of Jerusalem by the heathen and exile are here foretold. Yet a remnant shall remain in the city. Ver. 3. Then only, by Yahveh's appearance, will the victorious course held out to view in xii. 8 f. be traversed.— As on the day when He fought, in the time of the renowned מלחמות י״י. Ver. 4. The Lord will take His stand on the *Mount of Olives*, commanding Jerusalem, cf. Ezek. xi. 23; this hill range, lying east of the city, retained its name into N. T. days, plainly because it was thickly studded with olive trees.—But this mountain will open in the parousia, so that a wide valley will arise in its midst, a protecting citadel to the terror-stricken. —מחציו, from its half, *i.e.* from its midst. Ver. 5. The valley, so arising, will be a place of refuge for the congregation of the

tains,—for the valley of the mountains shall reach to Azel,—and you shall flee as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah, the king of Judah; and Yahveh my God shall appear, all the saints with thee!—6. And it shall come to pass on that day, it shall not be light, the lustrous stars veil themselves. 7. And it shall be a fixed day, that is known to Yahveh, neither day nor night; and it shall come to pass: at the time of evening it shall be light.

8. And it shall come to pass on that day, living waters

Lord.—*Into the valley of my mountains*, i.e. enclosed by the mountains of the manifested Lord. The Mount of Olives has multiplied into many by the cleavage. The difficult words, "for the valley of the mountains shall reach," etc., seem to show the possibility of fleeing from Jerusalem into that guarded valley. אצל seems a name of place, and, indeed, perhaps = בית האצל, Micah i. 11. According to Cyril, it is a village lying at the foot of the Mount of Olives.—*5b.* So precipitately, without halting and without reflection, will the entire population of Jerusalem stream out thither, as in the *earthquake under Uzziah* (Amos i. 1), that terrible catastrophe, which lingered in the memory for centuries as the most terrible thing seen in Jerusalem.—*5c.* It is the day of the terrible, but yet welcome, parousia of the Lord the God, in whose name the prophet speaks (אלהי), and to the invocation of whom he involuntarily passes over (עמד). The Lord is then accompanied by all His angels (קדשים, as in Job v. 1; cf. Deut. xxxiii. 2; Matt. xvi. 27, xxv. 31). Ver. 6 f. describes the dismal appearance of that fateful day; cf. Joel ii. 2, iv. 15; Amos v. 18; Isa. xiii. 10; Matt. xxiv. 29; Rev. vi. 12. Kethib to be retained: יִקְרוֹת יִקְפָּאוּן, the lustrous ones (stars; cf. Job xxxi. 26) withdraw themselves, draw in their brightness (cf. Joel ii. 10, iv. 15), are darkened (according to others, Kal, to congeal, vanish away?). Keri, less well, וְקִפָּאוֹן קְרוֹת, cold and frost. Ver. 7. אחד יום, *one* single, definite *day; which is settled*, known to the Lord.—*Not day and not night*, like the mysterious light when day and night are contending together, until at last, toward evening, the light conquers,—the light of salvation breaking its way through the night of judgment. Ver. 8. The idea of Joel iv. 18 appears again in richer form; cf. afterwards, Ezek. xlvii. 1 ff. Fresh flowing waters stream through the arid wadis of Judah to the *front* (eastern = Dead; Ezek. xlvii. 18) and to the *hinder* (western = Mediterranean) *sea*. These brooks stream *summer*

shall go forth from Jerusalem, the half of them to the front sea and the other half to the hinder sea; in summer and winter it shall be. 9. And Yahveh shall be king over all the earth; on the same day Yahveh shall be one and his name alone. 10. The whole land shall be changed, like the Jordan-plain, from Geba to Rimmon in the south of Jerusalem. And she shall tower aloft, and dwell peacefully in her place, from the Benjamin gate to the place of the former gate, to the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananel to the winepresses

and winter (Gen. viii. 22) without drying up,—are therefore not merely present in the rainy season,—which really lends them their value. Ver. 9. What Deut. vi. 4 f. enjoins on Israel will then become known to the whole earth: the *supremacy* of Yahveh, who is *one* in His nature and His revelation (cf. שֵׁם). הארץ here is not to be understood, with Stade, of the "country" according to ver. 10, as in the last verse only the residence of this king is spoken of; on the other hand, ver. 15 ff. show that, in consequence of the heavy judgments falling on the heathen (ver. 12 f.), His rule will be acknowledged over the whole earth; see in ver. 16 f. especially the homage rendered to the *king!*—By the *unity of the name* of Yahveh is to be understood primarily unity of designation, which is important, as the plurality of designations of the one God has led, in various ways, to plural conceptions of the Godhead. But in the name a definite revelation of God is expressed, so that the unity of the divine name on earth assumes agreement in views of revelation. Hosea already is conscious of the danger of diverse designations of Yahveh (ii. 18). It is therefore quite unwarrantable to discover in this passage a mark of a Hellenistic age (Stade, ii. 169), as though a protest were made against the view falsely imputed to Malachi (i. 11): that the heathen merely worshipped Yahveh under other names! Ver. 10. *The whole land of Judah will be transformed* (imperf. Kal in masc. instead of fem., because a prefixed predicate) into the likeness of the ערבה, which is here, as often, the proper name of the deep valley on the lowermost Jordan, which was distinguished by the most luxuriant vegetation. The extent of this land of Judah is described by the definition: from *Gebah* (in the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii. 24; mentioned also in 2 Kings xxiii. 8 as a Judæan border-place) *unto Rimmon, south of Jerusalem.* There was a rock Rimmon in the hill-range of Benjamin (Judg. xx. 45, 47), and a town of Rimmon in Galilee (Josh. xix. 13).

of the king. 11. And they shall dwell in her, and there shall be no more curse, and Jerusalem shall dwell in safety.

12. And this shall be the plague with which Yahveh smites all nations which have taken the field against Jerusalem: he makes his flesh rot while he yet stands on his feet, and his eyes shall decay in their sockets, and their tongue decay in their mouth. 13. And it shall come to pass on that day, the discomfiting of Yahveh shall be mighty among them. 14. And they seize every one the hand of his neighbour, and the hand of one is raised above the hand of the other. And Judah also shall fight at Jerusalem; and the riches of all heathen nations round about is collected: gold and silver

The place meant is the border town toward Edom, mentioned in Josh. xv. 32.—רוּם = רָאם: it will proclaim itself a royal city by its towering position; cf. Isa. ii. 2; Micah iv. 1; Ezek. xl. 2. —וישבה ת׳, as in xii. 6. As formerly of the land, here also the full extent of the city is given, as to gates, towers, etc., which can no longer be all identified.—The *Benjamin gate*, lying on the north; see Jer. xxxvii. 13, and on Jer. xvii. 19.—*Corner gate* and *tower of Hananel*, as in Jer. xxxi. 38 (see Comm. there); the *king's winepresses*, lying certainly in the king's garden, south of the city. On the other hand, הראשון ש׳, probably the *former* (now no longer accessible) gate.—לִמִּן must be supplied before מגדל. By the last line, therefore, without doubt the extent from north to south is measured; by the first two, that from the Benjamin gate to the north-west. To this line also belongs, perhaps, the former gate. The north-east corner, on the other hand, is taken up again in the last definition. Ver. 11. חרם, ban, sentence of destruction. This no longer occurs, because the sins which provoked it have vanished (cf. xiii. 1 ff.). Ver. 12. מקק, Hiphil, here only, in causative sense, so that God is subject.—The phrases, chosen as drastic representations of the horrible end, are not to be prosaically pressed, as ver. 13 already shows, where the destruction is traced to the attacks of the heathen on each other. In the first kind of death the pestilence is intimated. Ver. 13. *Confusion* or stupefaction of Yahveh, *i.e.* panic caused by Yahveh; cf. xii. 4. One will fall on the other's arm, and try to raise his hand in order to strike higher than his adversary's hand. Ver. 14. Most render, "and even Judah will war against Jerusalem," which is entirely against the context. Köhler as above, which well agrees with xii. 6 ff. The camp of the heathen before Jerusalem falls, with rich

and garments in great abundance. 15. And so shall be the plague of the horse, mule, camel, and ass, and all cattle that shall be in those camps, answering to the same plague.

16. And it shall come to pass, every one that is left of all heathen nations that came against Jerusalem, they shall go up year by year to do homage to the king, Yahveh of hosts, and to observe the feast of tabernacles. 17. And it shall come to pass, whoever goes not up of the families of the earth to Jerusalem to do homage to the king, Yahveh of hosts, upon them no rain shall come. 18. And if the family of Egypt go not up and present not itself, upon them the plague shall (not) come with which Yahveh smites the heathen who go not up to observe the feast of tabernacles. 19. This shall be

booty, into the hands of the Judæans. The combination of war and booty as in Judg. v. 19, where the latter, indeed, is wanting. Ver. 15. The same plague which, according to ver. 12, smites the men of the hostile host, comes on their beasts.—The noun מחנות is *gen. comm.* Ver. 16. The fruit of the judgment, as already announced in ver. 9, is universal homage to the universal ruler, Yahveh.—מדי; cf. 1 Sam. i. 7. By די the amount of "year to year" is summed together; מן does not indicate the starting-point, but is properly partitive.—The *feast of tabernacles* in autumn was principally an agrarian feast, and comes into view as such here. Ver. 17. Whoever does not present himself at this thanksgiving-feast gets no blessing in the next year, *i.e.* no rain for his land. The early rain fell soon after the feast of tabernacles. Ver. 18. *Egypt* is specially named on account of its peculiar conditions of climate. Although apparently not dependent on the rain, as it is watered by the Nile, its river will not exempt it from going to Jerusalem. Most supply the words תהיה הגשם to ולא עליהם; but this would be harsh, and not suitable to the conditions, as Egypt itself needs little rain. Others according to Targ.: "so the Nile will not mount (over them)," which, however, could only be obtained by a greater change in the text, *e.g.* by ולא בא היאור עליהם, by which, however, the connection with what follows would be lost. Hitz.: ולא = והלא, not to be accepted. Erase the second ולא, which easily crept in before עליהם from the previous line; in the same way the Athnach should be removed. The meaning: the plague (of want of water) will overtake them also. Ver. 19. חטאת, here the penalty imposed, the punishment of

the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations who shall not go up to celebrate the feast of tabernacles. 20. On that day shall there be on the bells of the horses, "holy to Yahveh," and the pots in the house of Yahveh shall be like the sacrificial bowls before the altar. 21. And every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holy to Yahveh of hosts; and all that offer sacrifice shall come and take of them and cook therein, and no trafficker shall be any more in the house of Yahveh in that day.

Exposition.

Contents of chs. xii.–xiv. Judah and Jerusalem of the future. 1. The Deliverance of the imperilled city by God's Judgment on the Heathen, xii. 1–9; 2. Penitential Mourning in Jerusalem, xii. 10–14; 3. The Divine Cleansing of the People, xiii. 1–6; 4. The Preliminary Judgment of Purification, xiii. 7–9; 5. The Day of Yahveh in Jerusalem, xiv. 1–7; 6. The New State, xiv. 8–21: *a.* City and Land made young again, vv. 8–11; *b.* Judgment on their Op-

sin. Ver. 20. The whole of Judah-Jerusalem will then be *sanctified:* Even the most worldly and profane things (hence symbolically threatened with destruction, ix. 10), the *horses* then wear on their *bells* (on which the names of the owners are usually put) the signature of the Holy One. And what previously had the least degree of holiness, the earthen *vessels*, in which the sacrificial meals were cooked, will then possess the highest degree of holiness, like the bowls into which the blood is poured on the altar. Ver. 21. Nay, the vessels in the whole land of Judah, even those at present wholly profane, will then be as holy as those used in the house of Yahveh; so that the strangers, who come in crowds, may use them without fear, and need not themselves buy vessels in the temple. To this, perhaps, the clause applies: *and there shall no more be any trafficker*, etc.—כנעני we take, with Hitz., in the commercial, not national, sense; cf. Isa. xxiii. 8 and often. The trafficking in sacrificial animals and vessels in the precincts of the temple, condemned in John ii. 14 ff., Matt. xxi. 12 f., was already an eyesore to the prophet. He rejoices at the time when this shall cease.

pressors, vv. 12–15; *c.* All Nations must worship Yahveh in Jerusalem, vv. 16–21.

Respecting the relation of this section to the rest of the book, its author and date, see Introd. p. 304 ff. These oracles turn entirely on Jerusalem-Judah, and, indeed, on its straitness and siege by heathen nations. The situation is that of the time of Jeremiah, with which, also, the reference to the catastrophe of Hadad-Rimmon, xii. 11, agrees; but the precursor, from whose beginnings the author especially starts, is Joel, whose eschatological outlooks undergo here an original development.

The certainty, already expressed by other prophets, that the city of God cannot perish through the heathen, comes first in xii. 1 ff. Although all nations conspire against it and try their strength on it, they shall only in drinking from this cup imbibe deadening stupor, and in lifting this stone incur mortal injury. During the siege the Lord will come to save His people, and involve the besiegers in massacre and utter destruction. Peculiar in this respect is the distinction of the Judæan country-people above the cities, ver. 7, a sign that the Lord's favour is not tied to the walls of the city and the stones of the temple. Noteworthy, also, is the increase of power (ver. 8) which the dwellers in Jerusalem receive at God's hands. The weakest among them will be a hero like David, who "leaped over a wall" in the strength of his Lord (Ps. xviii. 30); and the house of David like those celestial champions (Ps. ciii. 20) who execute God's deeds,—nay, like the Angel of the presence who led Israel to victory in the days of Moses and Joshua, and in whom God's most distinctive attributes are seen (Ex. xxxiii. 2; Isa. lxiii. 9). Thus the Church, in all its members, is pervaded by divine power; and its head is a king of David's house, in whom the divine leading is embodied in a way unheard of before.

But before Judah can be raised to this height it must be plunged in the depths of most painful humiliation and

anguish. Before the Divine Spirit can breathe power into the nation and royal house, He must work repentance in head and members. In particular, the guilt it has incurred in the Lord's sight, by audaciously attacking and killing its chosen representative, must be the object of bitterest confession and unqualified self-reproach. Who is this, in whose person the nation attacks God Himself with its murderous steel? Is it a king of David's house, perchance the great Davidite promised in ix. 9, as well as in Isaiah and Micah? This may be favoured by the fact that the sorrow for him is compared to that for King Josiah, the best of David's successors (ver. 11), and that the same man of God is called shepherd of the people, xiii. 7. Yet Zech. xi. 4 ff. shows that this designation may also suit a prophet; and that parallel is rather in favour of one, as the house of David appears here before God simply at the head of the penitent ones (cf. also xiii. 1). The prophet may have pictured to himself the man of God, whom he leaves mysteriously indefinite, as a prophetic national leader, who incurs at the hands of princes and people the fate prepared, according to tradition, by Manasseh for Isaiah, by Jehoiakim for Uriah (Jer. xxvi. 20 ff.), and by several rulers almost for Jeremiah. But he is not thinking of a prophet's murder already committed, but simply foresees (as in Isa. liii.), in the light of experience, that the most devoted Servant of the Lord will experience at the hands of the leaders of the nation the most hostile treatment, and even death. But this dreadful fact itself will lead the nation, after the Spirit of the Lord has been bestowed on it, to reflect on its transgression against the Lord. Deeply moved, they will look up to God and mourn for the man of God as universally as if the land had lost its favourite king, and withal as sincerely and bitterly as if every house were lamenting its first-born, nay only son. That this Shepherd of the people by God's grace, was in fact the noblest scion of the seed of Abraham and David, the perfect Messiah announced by Zech.

ix. 9, Isaiah, Micah, *et al.*, was first shown by the fulfilment, which also first perfectly justifies the bold anthropomorphism (ver. 10) transferring the man's fate to God. With the mourning of Judah described in ver. 10 ff., and produced by the Spirit of God, for the murdered one, cf., as an initial fulfilment, the account of Pentecost in Acts ii., where Peter cries to the dwellers in Jerusalem: *τοῦτον διὰ χειρὸς ἀνόμων προσπήξαντες ἀνείλατε* (ver. 23), and on this accusation their heart was pierced (*κατενύγησαν τὴν καρδίαν*, ver. 37).

Ch. xiii. is closely connected with xii. 10–14. The opening of a fountain of cleansing and forgiveness is the consequence of sincere repentance, and both together a condition of the new salvation. To that subjective side of complete repentance the objective provision of an expiation on God's part must be added in order to the setting aside of the great guilt. It is described symbolically, as in Ezek. xxxvi. 25. But whereas there a mere sprinkling with clean water is spoken of, Zech. xiii. 1 speaks of a fountain, always open for cleansing or justifying; so that a spring of righteousness, opened by God, renders the previous inadequate means of cleansing superfluous. This spring is not more precisely defined. According to Isa. liii., it would spring from the suffering and death of the great Servant of God, which, however, is not stated here. On the other hand, the prophet is probably thinking of the temple-spring promised in Joel iv. 18, which is certainly considered there in its fertilising aspect (cf., however, Joel iv. 21), which Zechariah only refers to in xiv. 8. In xiii. 2 ff. justification is followed by sanctification, *i.e.* the cleansing of the act by the cleansing of the acting, which is also God's work. In particular, the two chief sins polluting the land in God's eyes are done away,—idolatry and false prophets,—xiii. 7 ff. As the nation will not at present give up these sins, the time of grace must be preceded by severe judgment. God will allow His chosen, gracious instrument, the good Shepherd, who is most closely

united with Him (to be combined with xii. 10, not with xi. 15 ff.!), to fall by murderous hands, and so give over the better ones, who still adhered to Him, to destruction. The judgment, bursting in irresistibly after His fall, will leave only a third of the nation, and even this must be thoroughly tested and refined before the Lord can make it His possession.

Ch. xiv. 1 f. glances at the near future, in which a siege of Jerusalem by the heathen is preparing. Despite xii. 1 ff., the siege will end in the capture of the city, which is dishonoured by the sinfulness of its inhabitants. But in this way the vision of xii. 1 ff. is verified, as, in the first place, a remnant of population is left in Jerusalem; and, secondly, the universal but futile attack of the nations on God's city foretold by Joel, which leads to the judgment on the world, follows later, on the real "day of the Lord," xiv. 3 ff., when Yahveh comes with His heavenly hosts, ver. 5. The description here is visionary in a high degree,—*i.e.* it is all seen in drastic, sensuous colours, but it is not to be understood in a grossly sensuous way. The nations gather in great multitudes near to Jerusalem, especially in the Kidron valley (cf. Joel). But the Lord opens a place of refuge to the distressed inhabitants of Jerusalem,—the Mount of Olives, where His glory is to be seen, pushing forward its cliffs, like guarding walls, to the four quarters of heaven, and receiving the fugitives into its bosom (ver. 4 f.). How the hostile heathen fare, with whom the Lord fights (ver. 3), is afterwards painted in dreadful colours, ver. 12 ff. They perish rather by the hand of the angel of death and their own weapons than by those of the Jews, leaving rich booty to the latter. Examples of such an overthrow are not wanting in history. Cf. especially, Isa. xxxvii. 36 as to corruption in the living body; on the mutual destruction, *e.g.* Judg. vii. 22; 2 Chron. xx. 23.

The fruit of such a revelation of the majesty of Yahveh is described in ver. 8 ff. The land, now conceived as purified according to xiii. 1 ff., will be intersected by fertilising

waters (see above); Yahveh will be acknowledged as supreme sovereign in the whole earth (ver. 9). The perfectly restored city of God (ver. 10 f.; cf. on Jer. xxxi. 38) will form, according to ver. 16 ff., the goal of the pilgrimage of all nations; for from His sanctuary there Yahveh will dispense blessing to those who visit it, whilst those who remain far from the place will perish unblessed. But Jerusalem itself, with its surroundings, will be so permeated by the divine holiness that nothing at all profane will be left there, but the most secular things in themselves will be consecrated and fitted for God's service; everything profane (temple-trade) is kept aloof, and the most insignificant things in the temple will be altogether holy. This holiness of things corresponds to the enhancement of divine power affirmed of men in xii. 8. The fulfilment of the oracle is to be regarded like that of the national pilgrimage, Isa. ii.; see Comm. there. Zech. i.–viii. also has a similar conclusion.

MALACHI.

Introduction.

The name Malachi (מלאכי; LXX: *Μαλαχίας*; Vulg: Malachias) is by many not acknowledged as the historic proper name of a prophet on account of its signification (cf. iii. 1), and because it occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament. Misled by the frequent meaning of the word (angel), several Fathers even took this prophet for an incarnate angel, as also they did Haggai (on account of Hag. i. 13), which Jerome on Hag. i. 13 disclaims. Nay, even LXX seem to have so taken the word, translating Mal. i. 1, *ἐν χειρὶ ἀγγέλου αὐτοῦ*. Others see in מלאכי a name of dignity and office which the author of the book assumed. So the Targumist Jonathan, who takes him for Ezra; similarly several Rabbins; among moderns, Hengstenberg, *et al.* Others again assert that the writing appeared anonymously (Ewald, Reuss, *et al.*); a compiler, perhaps the same who added the similar headings in Zech. ix. 1, xii. 1, first picked out from iii. 1 the catch-word מלאכי (according to Ew. *angelicus* ?). But whoever wrote this heading plainly assumes by his simple ביד, that Malachi is a real proper name, and its bearer well known to the readers. The name is to be explained as an abbreviation of מַלְאַכְיָה, like אֲבִי, 2 Kings xviii. 2, of אֲבִיָּה, 2 Chron. xxix. 1. See further in Caspari, *Micha*, p. 27 ff. So also Hitzig, Köhler, Keil, Nägelsbach, *et al.*, who acknowledge the historicity of the name. Still, certainly, the possibility remains open, that Malachi did not bear this name among

the people from his birth, but only from his call to be a messenger of Yahveh (cf. Hag. i. 13); he plays on the name in iii. 1, see there. Respecting the prophet's personality nothing is known but what can be learnt from this book. Because of the prominence given to the priesthood in the book, it has been conjectured that Malachi belonged to it; but there is no certainty on the point. See traditions of no importance in Köhler, p. 10 f.

The time, in which the present discourses of Malachi were delivered, was in general the post-exilic, and indeed incontestably later than the time of the labours of Haggai and Zechariah. The temple had been completed a considerable time, the sacrificial service was in full force, although the first zeal for it was greatly abated, Mal. i. 6 ff., ii. 1 ff., iii. i. 10, etc. The moral and religious offences, calling forth Malachi's sharp rebuke, are different from those censured by Haggai and Zechariah, showing on the other hand close affinity with those opposed by Ezra (returned to the homeland in the year 458 B.C.) and Nehemiah (came back in the year 445). The state of things presupposed in Malachi is most nearly akin to that found by Nehemiah, ch. xiii.; he opposes (ii. 11) the marrying of heathen women like Neh. xiii. 23 ff. (cf. already Ezra ix. 1 ff., x. 1 ff.), and rebukes in different ways the defective offerings (i. 7 ff.) and imposts (iii. 10), as Nehemiah does partially, xiii. 10 ff. Nägelsbach rightly calls attention to the fact that these reproofs do not suit the early days of Ezra, when the government met the expense of the temple-service (Ezra vi. 9 f., vii. 20 ff.), but presuppose the voluntary obligation of the nation to do so, Neh. x. 33. And indeed some time had elapsed since the obligation was assumed. As also Mal. i. 8 makes it highly improbable that Nehemiah was governor at the time when the prophet so spoke (see on the passage), we must suppose that this took place during Nehemiah's temporary absence. Twelve years after taking up that office, *i.e.* in the year 433 B.C.,

he returned for an indefinitely long period to the court of Artaxerxes (Neh. xiii. 6), and in ch. xiii. describes the evils which on his return to Jerusalem he found newly broken out, and then thoroughly reformed, so that no prophecy of Malachi is probable after the reformation described in Neh. xiii. That, consequently, Malachi's discourses are to be placed in the middle period between Nehemiah's first and second presence in Jerusalem, is also the opinion of Nägelsbach, Köhler, Schrader, *et al.* This brings us to the years 433–424 (death of Artaxerxes), consequently Malachi's writing is about a hundred years later than that of Haggai and Zechariah.

The aim of Malachi's discourses is directed against sluggishness and want of interest in the worship of Yahveh, and irresponsible laxity in the observance of theocratic and ethical precepts. The priesthood especially is called to account in regard to this decay of the fear of God and the sense of duty. In particular, Malachi protests, as already mentioned, against marriages with heathen women, which imperilled the theocratic character of the commonwealth (ii. 11), but still more against the repudiations, going on with ever-increasing lightheartedness, of legitimate wives (ii. 14). And as Malachi had to contend with externalised work-service, which seems to have been carried on chiefly by the elders after the manner of the later Pharisees, so he has to contend with naked unbelief, by which the young generation was perhaps especially infected. But the prophet's aim in his addresses of reform and rebuke is neither to serve mere morality nor the theocratic system, but to prepare for the coming of the Lord, which the early prophets as well as Haggai and Zechariah had described as approaching, but which the impatient and unbelieving had called in question. This coming of the Lord is certain and near; but so severe is its import, that the sifting and purifying, which His entrance into the temple will bring with it, must inflict destruction on priests and people, unless the Lord in His

mercy will send a true Elijah to carry out this work of preparation, which meets with such strong resistance, and to convert Israel to His service. Böhme (*Zeitschr. f. d. altt. Wissensch.* 1887, p. 210 ff.) has indeed denied the characteristic conclusion, iii. 22–24, to be by the author of the book. But neither the linguistic arguments seem to us to be conclusive, nor the actual relation of iii. 24 to iii. 1, so soon as in the latter passage one does not erroneously understand the angel of Yahveh by the preparer of the way.

The writing of Malachi is perhaps a compilation of oral addresses, which followed each other at no great intervals. The manner of writing is prosaic, the language slightly Aramaic in form, the description in many respects original. It is especially surprising that here first, instead of the old poetic and rhetorical mode of speech, a dialectic form of teaching appears, which is much cultivated in later Judaism. Malachi usually prefixes a general proposition, provoking contradiction, and then, after interweaving the counter-statement, specialises and so also justifies and expounds it see i. 2 f., 6 ff., iii. 8 f., 13 f., and elsewhere.

Special literature on Malachi: C. Vitringa, *Observationes Sacræ*, lvi. Reinke (Cath.), *Der Prophet Malcachi*, Giessen 1856. A. Köhler, *Die Weissagungen Malcachis*, 1865. Nägelsbach-Volck, art. "Maleachi," in Herzog.

I. 1. Oracle, the word of Yahveh to Israel by the hand of Malachi.

First Discourse: Complaint respecting Neglect of the Lord, Ch. i.

2. I have loved you, says Yahveh. And you say,

Chapter I.

Ver. 1. On the heading see the Introd.—בִּיד, see Comm. on Jer. xxxvii. 2. Ver. 2. First the Lord's *love* for His people is

"Wherein hast thou loved us?" Is not Esau Jacob's brother? is Yahveh's oracle: and I loved Jacob; 3. and Esau I hated, and I made his mountains a desert, and (gave) his inheritance to the jackals of the wilderness. 4. If Edom says: "We are broken in pieces indeed, but we will build up the waste places again;" thus says Yahveh of hosts: They may build, but I will pull down: and men shall call them the "border of wickedness," and "The people with whom Yahveh is wroth for ever." 5. And your eyes shall behold it, and you shall say, "Great is Yahveh beyond the border of Israel."

exhibited in order afterwards to accuse them of want of love in return. The proof of His love is given in the opposite example, Esau; the latter, though Jacob's equal by birth, found no favour with the Lord. On the line of thought see the Introd. p. 384. The hearers, who do not seem to know that the Lord loves them, may study that contrast.—*Jacob and Esau* is a designedly personal designation of the nations, as the question is God's attitude to them, which took its beginning in relation to their ancestors. Ver. 3. The Edomites must have felt God's displeasure in their land in the shape of hostile devastation.—תנות, as elsewhere תַּנִּים (cf. Isa. xxxiv. 13, against Edom); on the other hand, LXX, Syr., dwellings, which modern writers would support by the Arabic stem *tana'a*.—This devastation was probably the work of the Babylonians, with whom, indeed, the Edomites made common cause at the fall of Jerusalem, but who later, under the same Nebuchadnezzar, again touched the territory in a hostile way (see on Jer. p. 342 f.). Others suggest the wars waged between the Persians and Egypt, as the devastation of Edom belongs plainly to the most recent past. But the latter is not certain. The text merely assumes that Edom has not yet recovered from the spoliation, and especially declares that Edom will never again attain prosperity. Ver. 4. תאמר, not to be taken as 2nd person, as Edom is not further addressed, but 3rd pers. sing. fem. of the general community.—Because Edom's misfortune depends on God's disposition, it will never (quite differently from Israel!) recover from it. That this divine displeasure, however, is not without moral reason, is shown by נ' רשעה (cf. Zech. v. 8).—זעם, as in Zech. i. 12. Ver. 5. Jacob is addressed. It shall be witness of the displeasure of Yahveh against Edom, which continues ever the same, and in its fate will see a palpable proof of the divine

6. A son will honour his father, and a servant his lord: but if I am a father, where is my honour? and if I am dominion, where is the fear of me? says Yahveh of hosts to you, ye *priests*, ye despisers of my name! And you say indeed: "Wherein have we despised thy name?" 7. You offer now polluted food on my altar; and you say: "Wherewith did we pollute thee?" In that you say: "The table of Yahveh is contemptible." 8. And when you bring

rule beyond Israel's territory. By מעל כ Yahveh is described as the God reigning over this land, but thence ruling over the earth. Ver. 6. If only the close relation of God to His people were duly regarded by the latter! But although He chose, as is well known, Jacob for His *son* (Ex. iv. 22; Hos. xi. 1.; Jer. xxxi. 9, and often) and *servant* (Isa. xli. 8 and often), this nation is wanting in the simplest tokens of reverence due to a father or master. In particular this reproach applies to the *priests*, who should be penetrated with the holiest reverence for God, but are chiefly responsible for the disregard of Yahveh, which has led to the decline of divine worship.—בָּזָה (=בוז), opposite of כבד, Piel, also 1 Sam. ii. 30. This accusation again needs proof, which ver. 7 gives by pointing to the decay of God's worship. Ver. 7. נגש, Hiphil of offering (הקריב) the sacrifices, as in Amos v. 25.—גאל, in late books in the sense of געל, to be unclean; Pual partic. defiled. This also they will not have said, that they had offered polluted sacrifices, and so defiled the Lord Himself, inflicting a stain on Him. But this is attested by their own words, *The table of Yahveh* is נבזה, contemptible, despicable, may be despised. And how they say this appears from ver. 8. Ver. 8. If one offers defective animals, according to their language it matters nothing. אין רע, *il n'y a pas de mal.* And yet this is strictly forbidden in the Mosaic law, Lev. xxii. 20–25; Deut. xv. 21. This indulgence of theirs, by which they encouraged the indolence of the people in holy things, is therefore an inexcusable disregard of the Lord. If it is right to offer such gifts to a great lord, let them attempt it with the governor. פחה (see on Jer. li. 23), as in Hag. i. 1, the Persian governor; and indeed this was, of course, no longer Zerubbabel, and also at the time scarcely Nehemiah, who could boast of having renounced the gifts belonging to him as governor (Neh. v. 14 f.), perhaps even a Persian. In the Mosaic law it was forbidden to the judge to accept presents, and so regard

the blind for sacrifice, "there is no evil in it," and when you bring the lame and sick, "there is no evil in it." Offer it now to thy governor, (and see) whether he will be pleased with thee, or show thee favour? says Yahveh of hosts. 9. Come, pacify now the face of God, that he may be gracious to us. From your hand this came (to him)—will he through you show himself favourably disposed? says Yahveh of hosts. 10. Would only there were some one among you to shut the doors, that you might not kindle my altar in vain! I have no pleasure in you, says Yahveh of hosts, and I will not accept an offering at your hand. 11. For from the rising of the sun to its going down my

persons (נשא פנים); but this corrupt practice crept in everywhere in the East, almost like something beyond question. If one did not directly wish unjust judgments to creep in, one still made sure of the governor's favour and goodwill in this way. Ver. 9. So they shall now see whether God is pleased with such things. חַלּוּ פְנֵי, as in Zech. vii. 2. The challenge is ironical, not an exhortation to repentance.—מִיֶּדְכֶם, from your side, states the quarter from which He might be moved to show favour. Ver. 10. Better no worship at all than such negligent, cold worship.—Who is among you and he shuts = would that there were among you some one who, moreover, would shut, that they might no more *in vain* (without effect, because without God's approval) *kindle the altar*, i.e. kindle sacrifice thereon (cf. Isa. xxvii. 11). Ver. 11. *Rising and setting* stand for the farthest ends of the earth, Zech. viii. 7; Ps. ciii. 12.—*My name is great among the heathen*, i.e. my revelation is acknowledged and held in honour.—מְקֻטָּר, properly, partic. Hoph., then used substantivally: incense. Others take both partic. as co-ordinated asyndetically in the sense of predicative sentences: incense is burnt, sacrifice is offered. That Yahveh receives pure, acceptable worship throughout the world, as His name is everywhere known and honoured, is adduced as the reason why He will not really be won by the impure, reluctant service of His people. He everywhere finds more zealous and faithful worshippers. It is disputed whether this refers to the present or future. In the former way Hitzig, Köhler (formerly in Comm.), Stade (see on Zech. xiv. 9) think that the prophet regards the heathen sacrificial service as offered in reality to Yahveh, for whom Ahuramazda, Zeus, etc., were but other names. But

name is great among the heathen ; and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering; for great is my name among the heathen nations, says Yahveh of hosts. 12. But you profane it in that you say: "The table of Yahveh is polluted, and its fruit, its eating, is contemptible." 13. And you say: "Behold, what a weariness!" and you puff at it, says Yahveh of hosts ; and when you bring what was stolen, and the lame, and the sick, and so bring an offering, should I accept it at your hand? says Yahveh. 14. And cursed (be) he who deceives, if in his flock (is) a

it would be unheard of that a prophet who holds such strict views of the law, and abominates foreign wives on account of their heathen deities as a pollution of the holy nation (ii. 11 f.), would apply the predicate *pure* to heathen offerings, and, moreover, contradicts the definite assertion, that knowledge of the *name* of Yahveh forms the postulate of such sacrifice. And the view which Köhler recently prefers (Herzog, xiii. 185), namely, that the saying applies to the offerings brought by proselytes among all nations of the earth (Pressel suggests the Jews of the diaspora), the incense of praise and the sacrifice of humble, trustful self-surrender, would be too little intelligible to the hearers. These could only think, although nothing formally points to the future, in the reference of the Lord to His numerous (still invisible) Church in the heathen world, of the future. So Luther, Œcolamp., Calv., Hengstenb., Keil, Delitzsch, *et al.* Ver. 12 repeats, in contrast with the honour which Yahveh finds among the heathen, the contempt with which the Jews treat Him (the divine name). So badly is the table of the Lord served, that even the eating of its fruit, *i.e.* of the portions of the sacrifice falling to the priests, is despised and reviled. Ver. 13. מתלאה (from מַה ת'), they cry out: What a nuisance, weariness, to be obliged to eat this! But for God it is said to be good enough.—נפה, Hiphil, properly to puff at, disparage. אותו refers to the fruit of the altar designed to be eaten ; to eat of this ought to be the greatest honour.—*What is stolen.* Thus, in the procuring of offerings, they are not particular about mine and thine.—Of such defects God does not say אין רע. On the contrary, such half offerings, in which He is robbed of His own, bring curse to the offerers, ver. 14. Ver. 14. In freewill offerings the sex of the animal was not prescribed, Lev. iii. 1, 6. But when the most perfect was vowed, it was deceit, instead of it, to offer afterwards a

male, and he has vowed (it) and slays for the Lord a wretched beast; for I am a great king, says Yahveh of hosts, and my name is feared among the heathen.

Exposition.

Contents of ch. i. First Discourse: Complaint of Neglect of the Lord. 1. The Lord's Love for Israel, vv. 1–5; 2. Neglect of Yahveh by Priests and People, vv. 6–14.

The discourse seeks, first of all, to awaken the feeling, how much Israel owes to the free grace of its God, who chose it for His covenant-people before other peoples, apart from its merit; and next, especially to arouse conscience, as the love due in return is so wanting, yea, even reverence itself (ver. 6). Neglect of the Lord appears chiefly in the careless way in which the people offered defective sacrifices, as well as tithes and heave or consecration offerings. For this the priests are mainly to blame, who in their indolence, perhaps also from desire to please, do not declare the most imperfect animals unfit for sacrifice, and countenance any infringement of the Lord's rights among the people, so that the entire sacrificial service has fallen into decay, and threatens to become a laughing-stock. Cf. the good resolutions come to under Nehemiah, Neh. x. 30 ff., 38 ff., and the decay which ensued notwithstanding, Neh. xiii. 10 ff. That a prophet here is so earnestly concerned for the normal outward character of the sacrificial victims, may seem strange. But this indignation is to be explained in the same way as the zeal of Haggai for the temple building. The indifference just expressed the want of all sense of fear of God, yea, of all knowledge of the divine

wretched animal (מְשֻׁחָת, the correct reading; part. Hoph. corrupted), or a sick female one, instead of the more valuable male one.—*And my name*, etc., ver. 11. The king, to whom the heathen pay deep reverence, will not let Himself be treated by His own people with contempt.

holiness and glory. Thus, destitute of all true fear of God, they as good as let the whole sacrificial worship fall to the ground (ver. 10). This leads the prophet to the grand utterance, peculiar in any case, which sees an acceptable worship of the true God spread over the entire world. Referring formally neither expressly to the present, nor definitely to the future, the central point of the oracle is, that it declares all nations better fitted in holiness for God's priestly service than Judah was then, and the whole earth worthy of being Yahveh's place of sacrifice, as Jerusalem alone had been hitherto. Therewith the two limits essential to the O. T. covenant, the national and the local, fall away, and the way is opened to John iv. 23 f. The reception of the heathen into God's kingdom was certainly announced, long before Malachi, as approaching; but only isolated intimations of the hallowing of the whole earth, making it everywhere the equal of sacred Zion, are found, Isa. xix. 19; Zeph. iii. 10. It is significant also that in the present passage this universal priesthood and universal sanctuary of Yahveh appear already in a connection admitting the possibility of the rejection of the Jews. The Lord can repudiate their degenerate worship in Jerusalem, as He everywhere finds altars and priests. The new covenant brought the fulfilment of this vision in its spiritualising of the Church, which had the rejection of carnally-minded Israel for its obverse. The Roman Church gives Mal. i. 11 a more definite reference to the mass-sacrifice, for which this passage has even to do duty as a chief proof (*Trident. Sess.* xxii.). But such an application of the language, which has been especially defended by Reinke in modern days, is invalid. The "incense" and the "pure offering" by no means point specially to the mass-sacrifice, which is so specially distinctive of that Church. Also in Malachi the question remains open, how far even the sacrificial practices of the Gentiles are to be regarded as spiritualised, after the holy space and holy personelle have undergone so unusual a spiritualising.

SECOND DISCOURSE: TREACHERY OF THE PRIESTS AND THE PEOPLE, II. 1–16.

II. 1. And now, this ordinance comes to you, *ye priests:* 2. If you hear not and lay not to heart, to show honour to my name, says Yahveh of hosts, I send the curse upon you, and will curse your blessings, yea, I have even cursed you, because you lay it not to heart. 3. Behold, I rebuke posterity for you, and scatter dung on your faces, the dung of your feasts, and men will bear you to it. 4. And you shall know that I sent this ordinance to you, that it is my covenant with Levi, says Yahveh of hosts. 5. My covenant was with

CHAPTER II.

Ver. 1. *This ordinance*, the order or decree contained in the following words: if you are not concerned for my honour, curse and shame will fall on you instead of blessing and honour. The Lord puts a categorical dilemma before them. Ver. 2. *Your blessings*, not: the benedictions uttered by the priests shall turn to the opposite (Ew., Keil, Pressel, *et al.*), nor yet are their incomes meant (Hitz.), but more generally and ideally the blessings which God has conferred on their tribe and order, called in ver. 5, after their contents, life and peace; cf. also posterity, ver. 3.—וגם אנכי, *and I have even* (in fact) *cursed them*, not mere repetition, but affirming that the decision is already made, because as matter of fact they show no honour to God's name. Ver. 3. גער (cf. Zech. iii. 2), including the idea of repression, bringing to an end.—הַזֶּרַע, not to be changed into הַזְּרֹעַ, "the (blessing and sacrificing) arm," after LXX, Aquila, Vulg., which Ew., Reinke, Keil, Köhler follow; but applies to the posterity promised to the tribe in special measure in devout service of the Lord as a blessing from Him whom they served (cf. ver. 5, החיים, and Jer. xiii. 18, 22). To this is added dishonouring treatment of their own person. This is drastically represented as casting into their face the dung left in the forecourts by the sacrificial beasts at the feasts.—ונישא, indefinite subj.: *one shall bear you to it* (to the dung, *i.e.* the place where it is left). Hitz.: Dung shall be cast on them, and they on the dung. Ver. 4. When these things befall them they shall know that the Lord has really sent them this categorical mandate, ver. 1 f., that it may henceforth determine His relation to Levi. Ver. 5. His *earlier* mandate, covenant-making with Levi, aimed

him life and peace, and I gave them him, that he might fear; and he feared me, and he trembled at my name. 6. Truthful teaching of the law was in his mouth, and no wickedness was found in his lips. In peace and integrity he walked with me, and he recovered many from transgression. 7. For the lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and men expect teaching in the law from his mouth, because he is a messenger of Yahveh of hosts. 8. But you have turned aside from the way, have caused many to fall by instruction; you have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says Yahveh of hosts. 9. So then I also make you contemptible and common to all the people, even as you kept not my ways and regarded persons in teaching the law.

at *life* and *peace*, i.e. peaceful wellbeing. These were the blessings which that covenant brought to the tribe, Num. xxv. 12 f. —*And I gave them to him, that he might fear*, i.e. as a motive and means to promote fear, which was effectual: They in fact feared me, and had a holy dread of me (נחת, Niph. of חתת). Ver. 6. תורת א׳, upright, truthful instruction in the law; opposite of those false sayings, אין רע, i. 8.—His *walk* was in harmony with the blameless language of the lips; and the effect of both was the conversion of the erring, whereas the present priests lead the nation into evil, and confirm it therein. Ver. 7. This (ver. 6) is the normal state, such as corresponds to the divine will about the priestly order, to which so high dignity is given, and so useful an office is entrusted of being the channel of God's messages to men. מלאך ה׳, the priest is called here in this sense like the prophet, Hag. i. 13. Ver. 8. The present priestly order, which has turned aside from God's ways, and leads the nation astray, is an antithesis to the worthy priestly order of ancient days.—*Has caused many to fall*, by false exposition of the law; cf. the opposite, ver. 6: השיב מעון ורבים. By such perversion of the Torah they make it a מִכְשׁוֹל, *σκάνδαλον*, instead of its being a light to the feet (Hitz.).—The auspicious *covenant of Levi* (not: of the Levite), *i.e.* of the tribe, they have turned into mischief, such a metamorphosis as was threatened in ver. 2 f. Ver. 9. The *jus talionis* is carried out on them, cf. i. 6 f., 12. —They are reproached with partisanship in judging. נשא פנים, the preference of persons, forbidden in the law in legal disputes, which often came before the priests as administrators of the

10. Have we not then all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why should we deal treacherously one with another to profane the covenant of our fathers? 11. Judah has dealt treacherously, and abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned the temple of Yahveh, which he loves, and has married the daughter of a strange god. 12. Yahveh will root out for the man who does so him that calls and him that gives reply from the tents of Jacob, and that brings an offering to Yahveh

holy law. Ver. 10 passes on to wrong not punished by the priests in consequence of their προσωποληψία. Among brethren such injustice should not occur. But the entire nation is a nation of brethren; for it has *one Father, one God.*—Malachi does not allude to Abraham or Jacob as the one progenitor, but to God (i. 6); hence he adds the second question for clearness. Certainly this God has not created the Jews only, but all men. But only they know Him as their Creator, and consequently He is their Father. נבנד, in any case to be taken as 1 plur., although Massora would perhaps read it Niph. (therefore not נִבְגַּד), to avoid the offence of the prophet including himself.—Just because the not merely physical but spiritual kinship of the Israelites is emphasised, they should not act treacherously to one another, as this is a breach of the holy covenant made with the fathers and embracing the whole nation. Ver. 11 gives the example of such treachery involving a breach of the covenant, which is specially in view: the marrying of foreign women, heathens, the prophet regards as treachery and abomination—a profaning of the *sanctuary of Yahveh*, i.e. of His people. The foreign woman is the *daughter of a strange god*, therefore belongs not to the community, whose Father is Yahveh. What was done, according to Ezra ix. 1 ff., x. 1 ff., Neh. xiii. 23 ff., by many members of the community, even priests and Levites, is affirmed of the whole land or nation, which is stained by this abomination. See on the matter at the close. Ver. 12. ער וענה, obscure double phrase to describe an entire body, and indeed here of a household. It seems to be an antithetical pair: *that calls* (ער, partic. transit., like Niph. elsewhere; cf. Job xli. 2), *and that makes reply; i.e.* all active in the house. Hitz. differently: "that is awake and speaks," which would both denote the living. Other explanations are still less satisfactory.—*And that offers sacrifice;* this clause applies specifically to the priests, whose every sin was doubly evil on account of their near rela-

of hosts. 13. And this you shall do the second time; you cover the altar of Yahveh with tears, with weeping and groaning, because there is no more inclination to (your) offering and to acceptance of what is well-pleasing at your hand. 14. And you say: "Wherefore?" Because Yahveh was witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, with whom thou hast dealt treacherously, as she is yet thy partner and the wife of thy covenant. 15. And not one has done this, while yet a

tion to the Lord; cf. iii. 3. From such a polluted house none will proceed, bold enough to present offerings to God. Ver. 13. Expositors translate wrongly: "and this you will do in the second place," which means: this is the second offence you will commit, namely, "cover the altar of Yahveh with tears," which is said to refer to the lamenting of the repudiated wives. עוד מאין will then mean: so that you turn no more. Rather translate as above. Utter God-forsakenness is denounced against them for the second time, such as preceded the destruction of the temple, and had it as a consequence. This menace also applies to the priests.—רצון, *abstr. pro concreto.* Ver. 14. If they ask why they again fall into such utter disfavour, the answer is: because of their unfaithfulness to their wives, or the lighthearted dismissal of them. *Yahveh is witness*, who avenges the violation of the holy covenant made in His sight. Although nothing is heard of a religious marriage in early days, this passage makes it highly probable that in the delivery of the bride to the bridegroom God was invoked as witness, as by Laban on the departure in Gen. xxxi. 50.—והיא נו׳ emphasises again the cruelty of casting off a partner to whom one has vowed fidelity, and with whom one has shared the finest joys of youth. Ver. 15. One feels the holy indignation under the power of which the prophet speaks, in the style, which is abrupt and obscure. The verse is a *crux interpretum.* We take לא אחד as subj. to עשה: no one has done this, who yet had anything of divine spirit. So most expositors. רוח denotes here the noble, God-related vital power, which gives him his moral dignity. *And what the One?* How was it with the one man of God, who was cited as putting away a wife? *Abraham*, who put away Hagar, is meant, but he sought godly posterity; *i.e.* for the sake of the God-pleasing seed, which he wished to preserve intact and untainted, at God's bidding (Gen. xxi. 12) he sent away the maid who was not included in the covenant of God. That Hagar was not his wife entrusted to him by solemn covenant, comes, of course, into account in judging his

remnant of spirit was in him. And how (did) the one so? In seeking a seed of God. So then take heed to your spirit, and deal not treacherously with the wife of thy youth. 16. For I hate putting away, says Yahveh, the God of Israel; and one covers his garment with outrage, says Yahveh of hosts. So then take heed to your spirit, and deal not treacherously!

Exposition.

Contents of ch. ii. 1–16. Second Discourse: Treachery of Priests and People. 1. Levi once and now, vv. 1–9; 2. Violations of Faith in Marriage and Divorce, vv. 10–16.

The discourse, ch. i., already sought first of all to awaken the conscience of the priests (i. 6), because they tolerated, and so were guilty of, infringements of the law of sacrifices and offerings. Here now, still more specifically, the priestly order is threatened with curse instead of the blessing once promised to it, if it dishonours the name of the Lord, as has actually been done, instead of honouring it, like the old priesthood of blessed memory, by unsullied and impartial administration of the divine law. The description, ii. 6 f., is ideal, like the one

conduct. Hitzig would even hold that his conduct is taken as a pattern: "The wife of his youth, Sarah, he did not cast off, but afterwards his second wife, the Egyptian Hagar." But the intention rather is to justify the one exception by the high motive which determined it: מבקש זרע א׳.—שמר, Niph. with ב, Jer. xvii. 21. That spirit can be lost, and whoever in such a course has yet a remnant of it must thereby damage it.—*One* shall not deal treacherously with the wife of *thy* youth, is one of the strangest changes of person in one sentence; perhaps תבגד should be read after LXX, Targ., Vulg., and many Hebrew codices.—The meaning of the verse becomes essentially different if one translates with Ewald, Reinke: "And has not One created them (man and wife), cf. ver. 10, and the entire (?) spirit belongs to him, and what does the One (God) seek? Divine seed." But this is more forced. Ver. 16. אֹהֵב is to be supplied to שָׂנֵא (verbal adjective, like חָפֵץ, iii. 1); cf. Zech. ix. 12.—שלח, infin. Piel. The word is commonly used of putting away wives, and was therefore unmistakeable in this connection.

in Isa. i. 21, 26; but at times the reality certainly corresponded to it, and the reputation of the priestly tribe rested in great measure on its former spiritual greatness and its unselfish zeal for the service of Yahveh. Conversely, the present despisers of the holy God will reap the greatest disgrace (iii. 9). It is characteristic that the priestly order, which hoped, by the readiness with which it surrendered the precepts of the divine law, to acquire popularity and honour among the people, and sought, by accommodating exposition of the legal ordinances to secure itself favour, will have nothing but scorn from the people as its reward.

In the second part (vv. 10–16) such moral and religious evils are exposed as the priests do not prevent, although they form gross infractions of the covenant-law (ii. 10 f., 14). The two worst current vices of this kind are mentioned: marrying foreign, heathen women, and casting off Israelitish wives. It is a question whether these two points of accusation are independent of each other, or the second is in causal connection with the first, as the marrying of foreign women would have to be more severely condemned, if it led to the casting off of Israelitish wives, and their dismissal was all the worse if it took place in order to make way for heathen women. Certainly, such a connection would exist in many cases. When heathen women were received into families, heathen laxity in regard to loosing and breaking the marriage covenant might easily find entrance. But these two accusations have yet a certain independence. The prophet disapproves the mixed marriages and the divorces absolutely, as Köhler rightly insists. In the former respect the law, doubtless, expressly and absolutely prohibited only to the

—*He covers* (namely, he that does so) his garment with wanton violence, *i.e.* he stands before all the world as a violent transgressor. The metaphorical explanation of לבוש, as if it meant wife, after Arabic analogies, as Schultens, Gesen., Hitz., Ew.,

Israelites the marrying of Canaanite women, for which occasion offered itself most frequently, Ex. xxxiv. 16; Deut. vii. 3 f. Malachi, like Ezra and Nehemiah (see on Mal. ii. 11), more generally condemns marriages with non-Israelites, and threatens them with destruction of offspring by the avenging hand of God, as such preference of foreigners, and their introduction into the holy nation, was treachery to that nation, ii. 10 f. It cannot be denied that these post-exilic reformers are stricter than the old law and the common practice. But this is intelligible, when one considers how earnestly the little, newborn commonwealth was bound to guard its peculiar character, so as not to be lost in heathenism. Also the reasons of the prohibition, Ex. xxxiv. 16, Deut. vii. 4, gave these men a virtual warrant for its further extension. As concerns divorce, the law, Deut. xxiv. 1, assumes its possibility under certain circumstances. But here let us read the saying, which expresses God's real intention: *I hate putting away* (ver. 16), which Jesus Christ confirms, Matt. xix. 8 f. and elsewhere. Our prophet lays the chief stress on this second accusation, foretelling God's complete departure from His temple, such as had been seen once already in the destruction and exile, on account of this offence.

Third Discourse: The Day of the Lord, ii. 17–iii. 24.

II. 17. You have wearied Yahveh with your words. And you say: "Wherewith have we wearied?" In saying: "Every evil-doer is good in the eyes of Yahveh, and he takes pleasure in them; or where is the God of judg-

think, must be rejected. Ver. 17 introduces to the following section. The censure here is, first of all, on moral laxity in judgment, connected with a morally worthless conception of God, as if He did not judge wickedness so severely. This latter conception believes that it is supported by experience, as little is seen of judgment on sinners; *or* (if it is otherwise) where is the God that judges? Cf. iii. 14 f.

ment?" III. 1. Behold, I will send my messenger to prepare the way before me, and the Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to his temple; and the covenant-angel, whom you desire, behold, he comes! says Yahveh of hosts. 2. And who can endure the day of his coming, and who can stand at his appearing? For he is like the refiner's fire, and like the fullers' soap. 3. And he will sit, a refiner and purifier of silver, and will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them like gold and silver; and they shall offer to Yahveh

Chapter III.

Ver. 1. But this judgment comes only too quickly. Yet before the advent of the judge on the day of the Lord, God's grace provides that a forerunner shall remove the hindrances which an unholy nation would offer to the coming Lord.—מלאכי, in allusion to the name of the prophet, who is conscious of being such a precursor, while certainly looking for a still mightier one, ver. 23.—*That he may clear the way before me;* cf. Isa. xl. 3 ff. This is urgently necessary, as the Lord, whom they challenge and long for, will come suddenly to judgment. This, perhaps, refers less to scornful denial of the day of judgment, although, no doubt, such enlightened mockers were not wanting in Malachi's days, and such are glanced at (ii. 17; cf. iii. 13 ff.), than to blinded souls, after the manner of Amos v. 18, 20, who fancied, in their weariness of life and theocratic ambition, "the parousia of the Lord would bring honour and glory to them along with their nation; why, then, should they not expect the coming of that day? The judge is called האדון, the *Lord* = God, and in the parallel clause מלאך הברית, the *covenant-angel.* Thus, as in Zech. ii. 15, the appearing of the Lord to dwell on Zion, and the judgment connected therewith, are conceived as mediated angelically by the angel who represents God's presence, and conveys God's special revelations to the covenant-nation, Ex. xxiii. 20 ff.; cf. xxxiii. 15, Isa. lxiii. 9, etc. This angel is God's self-revelation, and is, perhaps, to be distinguished from the preparatory forerunner. Ver. 2. In the condition of priests and people at that time none of them could endure that day, when the Lord separates everything impure as strictly as fire the dross (cf. Isa. i. 25), and purges away what is unclean as sharply as the lye of the fullers. Ver. 3. And he shall *sit,* alludes to the judge. Here, too, as in the whole book, the priests stand in the foreground. They must yet go through a due melting and cleansing before

offerings in righteousness. 4. And the offering of Judah and Jerusalem shall be acceptable to Yahveh, as in the days of the foretime, and as in years long past. 5. And I will come near to you to judgment, and will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and the adulterers, and the false swearers, and those who wrong the hireling in his wage, widow and orphan, and crush the stranger, without fearing me, says Yahveh of hosts. 6. For I, Yahveh, have not changed, and you, sons of Jacob, have not finished.* 7. From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from my statutes, and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, says Yahveh of hosts. And you say, "Wherein shall we return?" 8. Will then a man overreach God? For you overreach me. And you say, "Wherein do we overreach thee?" Tithe' and heave offering! 9. You are smitten with the

they can serve the Lord in an acceptable way. Ver. 4. Cf. ii. 5 f. Ver. 5. *As a swift witness.* He will appear only too quickly as a witness against their sins, as His coming is long delayed, or does them no hurt.—מְכַשֵּׁף, Piel partic., *sorcerers*, who practise heathen arts, such as necromancy, etc., which occurs in Israel in every age; cf. Ex. xxii. 17.—*Adultery* (cf. Ex. xx. 14; Lev. xx. 10; Deut. v. 17, xxii. 22) was the more common, the more lightly the marrying of heathen wives (ii. 11) and divorce (ii. 14) were treated. *False swearing*, cf. Zech. v. 3 f.—עָשַׁק, to oppress, here with actual object, the wage of the labourer, of course = to oppress the labourer in regard to his wage; cf. Deut. xxiv. 14 f.; Lev. xix. 13.—נטה, Hiphil, to bend, as in Amos v. 12, with personal object in the sense of הטה מישפט פ׳. Ver. 6. *I, Yahveh, have not changed*, I am still the old, strict God of judgment, *and you have not all come* under my judgment, you are still the old sinners. Better read Piel, כִּלִּיתֶם, *you have not completed* your sins, not brought them to an end, but ever continue. The author is fond of elliptical phrases. The ordinary explanations are unsatisfactory; so Luther: you shall not come to an end. Keil: you perish not, etc. Ver. 7*b*, as in Zech. i. 3. In what respect shall we turn? Here and elsewhere already the obstinate Jewish self-righteousness, which we see in the N. T., finds utterance. Ver. 8. קבע, akin to קבץ, to gather together, carry off, keep back.—כי adduces a reason why the prophet so inquires.—The *tithe* and *heave-offering* (nom., not accus.), namely, are the points in which you rob God. Here

curse because you overreach me, the whole nation together! 10. Bring ye the whole tithe to the treasure-house, that there may be food in my house, and prove me now herewith, says Yahveh of hosts, whether I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour you down a blessing to overflowing. 11. And I will rebuke the devourer for you, that he may not destroy for you the fruit of the earth, and your vine shall not miscarry in the field, says Yahveh of hosts. 12. And all nations shall pronounce you blessed, for you shall be a land of delight, says Yahveh of hosts.

13. Your words are too strong to me, says Yahveh. And you say: "What have we spoken against thee?" 14. You have said: "It is vain to serve God, and what profit does it bring, that we have observed his ordinance, and that we walked in mourning apparel before Yahveh of hosts? 15. And now we praise the arrogant; they are built up, who

also the language is elliptical. The accusation is like the one in ch. i., in the matter of sacrifices. Cf. on tithes, Lev. xxvii. 30 ff.; Num. xviii. 20 ff.; Deut. xiv. 22 ff.; on the heave-offering, Ezek. xliv. 30; on both, Neh. x. 38 f. Ver. 9. *You are laden with the curse* (ארר, Niph., cf. ii. 2), the second clause states the cause.—הגוי כלו; the profane expression is used contemptuously. Ver. 10. The *whole* tithe, not merely a part thereof, whereas you embezzle the rest.—The *treasure house*, here storehouse of the temple to receive offerings in kind, 2 Chron. xxxi. 11 f.; Neh. x. 38 ff., xiii. 5, 12 f.—*Support* for the ministering priests and Levites (Num. xviii. 21; Neh. x. 38 ff., xiii. 5), and the supply of requisites of worship (Neh. x. 33 ff.).—In the blessing, which God pours down from the windows of heaven, the rain is the material basis.—עד בלי די, not—so that vessels will be wanting, but to overflowing; properly, until there is no (more) need. Ver. 11. גער, again (cf. ii. 3), to check the action of anything by a command, to restrain one.—The *devourer;* so the lion is called, Judg. xiv. 14, but in this passage, without doubt, the dreaded locust, which consumes the produce of the ground (Kimchi, Rashi).—שכל, Piel, elsewhere used of animals; to have a miscarriage, here poetically of a vine, which fails to bear, bears uneatable fruit. Ver. 12. Cf. on the matter, Zech. viii. 13, 23. Ver. 13. חזק, to be strong, too strong, intolerable. Ver. 14. משמרתו שמר, Zech. iii. 7.—קדרנית, in black, in funeral attire, clothed in a שק. Ver. 15. זדים, the arrogant, completely

practise wickedness, and have tempted God and escaped." 16. Then the God-fearing spake one with another, and Yahveh hearkened and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before him for the God-fearers, and those who honour his name. 17. And they shall be my possession, says Yahveh of hosts, in the day which I determine; and I will spare them, even as a man spares his son who serves him. 18. And again you shall see the difference between the righteous man and the wicked, between him that serves God and him that serves him not. 19. For behold, the day comes, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant, and whoever practises wickedness, shall be chaff, and the day which is coming shall consume them, says Yahveh of hosts, so that it

destitute of the fear of God, insolent freethinkers. The heathen are not meant; rather there were such already among the Jews. The blasphemers call such happy, as they had done well in not troubling their life with God's service. Even these godless and wicked ones prosper, they grow into a house. This is the meaning of בנה, Niph., Jer. xii. 16. Their daring tempting of God does not bring destruction on them. Ver. 16. Those manifestoes of unbelievers have caused all who fear God also to join together. The import of their conversation is only to be inferred from the context: they took counsel to avoid such offence, and to preserve themselves and others from such unbelief. Yahveh hearkened, and marked well their names in order to recompense them. This is expressed in the words: *a book of remembrance was written before him.* This, of course, is as invisible as the book of life, Ps. lxix. 28, etc. Perhaps the Persian custom had influence of entering in a book of memorabilia those who had merited well of the king (Esth. vi. 1). On the meaning of חשב, cf. Isa. xiii. 17. Ver. 17. These faithful ones, on the judgment day, when they will be mercifully spared, will stand as the true Israel, God's people of possession (Ex. xix. 5), whom He acknowledges. Ver. 18. בין, as object of ראה, shows still its original substantival character. See *again*, such judgments as were reported numerously from old days, whereas at present no such distinction in the lot of the righteous and wicked is visible, which led to the blasphemies of ver. 14. Ver. 19. The day of melting and sifting (ver. 2 f.) is for such persons a day of consuming fire; cf. Gen. xv. 17 with Isa. xxx. 27.—*Root and branch*, the two extremities of the tree, to denote the whole. By קש is to be understood, not the

shall leave them neither root nor branch. 20. And for you, who fear my name, the sun of righteousness shall rise with healing in his wings, and you shall go out and leap like calves from the stall. 21. And you shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under your feet in the day which I determine, says Yahveh of hosts.

22. Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant, which I commanded him on Horeb respecting all Israel for statutes and laws. 23. Behold, I will send you the *prophet Elijah*, before the coming of the day of Yahveh, the great and terrible

stubble left on the field in the harvest, but the chaff tossed aside by the wind in threshing, and then burnt; cf. Matt. iii. 11 f. Ver. 20. *Sun of righteousness*, i.e. divine righteousness, which is for them as full of promise, as rich in salvation and joy, as a sun newly rising in their life. The light and the warmth of *this* sun are exceedingly beneficent, giving *healing* for all earthly pain and hurt. *In its wings*, i.e. rays.—פּוּשׁ, cf. Jer. l. 11. In the joy which the sunny day of the Lord brings them, "they shall be like *calves*, which are forced to stand through the winter in narrow stalls, but in early spring, when the sun comes forth from the wintry cloud-veil, are again driven into the open, and therefore leap and skip with unrestrained joy" (Köhler). Ver. 21. עָסַס, trample to pieces (cf. עָסִיס, wine, properly what is stamped, pressed); cf. the expression, not, of course, to be taken literally, in Micah iv. 13.—They will, perforce, let themselves be trodden down as helplessly as *ashes*. Ver. 22. The doctrine which they are to draw from all this is: they are to give themselves to the conscientious observing of the old *law of Moses*, and, indeed, of all its several precepts; cf. Neh. x. 30. Ver. 23. In order to bring them back to such obedience to Moses' law, God will send a special monitor, as iii. 1 already foretold. Here *the prophet Elijah* is named as the way-preparing messenger to be expected; not in the sense that the actual Elijah was to come back, as Ew., Hitz., take the passage after many ancients. So, indeed, the people, for the most part, perhaps, understood, to which the circumstance contributed, that Elijah did not die (2 Kings ii.), but was taken up bodily to heaven; cf. Matt. xvii. 10; John i. 21. See the notions of Rabbinical learning agreeing therewith in Ferd. Weber, *System der altsynagog. paläst. Theol.* p. 337 f. Rather this sending of Elijah is to be understood after the analogy of the raising up of David, Jer. xxx. 9 (see there,

(day), 24. that he may restore the heart of the fathers to the sons, and the heart of the sons to their fathers, that I may not come and smite the land with a ban.

Exposition.

Contents of ii. 17–iii. 24. Third Discourse: The Day of the Lord. 1. The Purifying Judgment, ii. 17–iii. 12; 2. Justification of the Divine Righteousness, iii. 13–21; 3. The Forerunner of the Judgment, iii. 22–24.

The nation is utterly lacking in moral earnestness. Some, by superficial adherence to the outward service of God, wherein, however, they are not afraid of even cheating God of His share (iii. 8 ff.), others, in open rebellion, making light of His commandments (iii. 13 ff., cf. ii. 17), provoke the judgment. The former, in blind self-righteousness and foolish

p. 377), and Ezek. xxxiv. 23, xxxvii. 24: the Lord will send one endued with Elijah's spirit and power to complete Elijah's work among the people. As Elijah, by word and sign, had brought back Israel from utter apostasy to obedience to its God, so this messenger, coming before the judgment day, will effect a saving transformation in Judah. Ver. 24 describes this transformation more fully as a reconciliation between *fathers* and *sons*. It thus appears that a religious gulf existed generally between the older and younger generations. The latter had broken with the law which the fathers still held outwardly in high esteem; the former, on this account, were estranged from the young. When that Elijah turns the nation to God, he will do away with this gulf. In again teaching the sons to fear God, he will again win the hearts of the fathers for them: and in again breathing into the fathers a fatherly spirit, he will again awaken in the hearts of the sons confidence and goodwill to the fathers.—הישיב לב, therefore not to be rendered "to turn to," as then we should justly expect that first of all the young, who have wandered farther, would be turned to the old, before the converse took place.—לב is rather to be taken as the seat of love, goodwill, confidence, as in Judg. xix. 3; Hos. ii. 16.—And such a change is necessary, that the coming of the Lord may not prove an annihilating judgment to the whole land.

illusion, long for the judgment, as though it would bring them honour; the latter deny that it will ever come. The former we must suppose, according to iii. 24, to have been especially numerous in the older generation; the latter represent in general the youth, who, not without the fathers' guilt, have become sceptical and freethinking. All alike are here told (iii. 1 ff.) that the appearing of the Lord, or of His angel, who is the organ of His presence, will take place only too soon for them, as His coming will be united with a thorough melting and sifting of His people, first of the priestly order, which shall serve him. Only a small remnant, remaining faithful in the severe temptations to unbelief and assaults of wickedness, shall be revealed on that day as the true Israel, the possession of the Lord (iii. 16 f., 20 f.). Here the community is transformed from a national corporation to a moral and religious fellowship. The righteousness of God in the distribution of awards, which many now fail to see, will then leave nothing to be desired for clearness and sharpness (iii. 18 ff.). But since, in view of the all but universal unfaithfulness of the nation, the Lord's coming must, in the main, tend to its destruction, the Lord in His mercy purposes before that day to send a powerful prophet in the manner of Elijah, who will prepare His way, and blessedly do away with the gulf between the holy God and the disobedient nation, as well as between the members of the nation. The last prophet of the old covenant here introduces the forerunner of the new.

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